

REDBOOK

M A G A Z I N E

December
25^c

1936

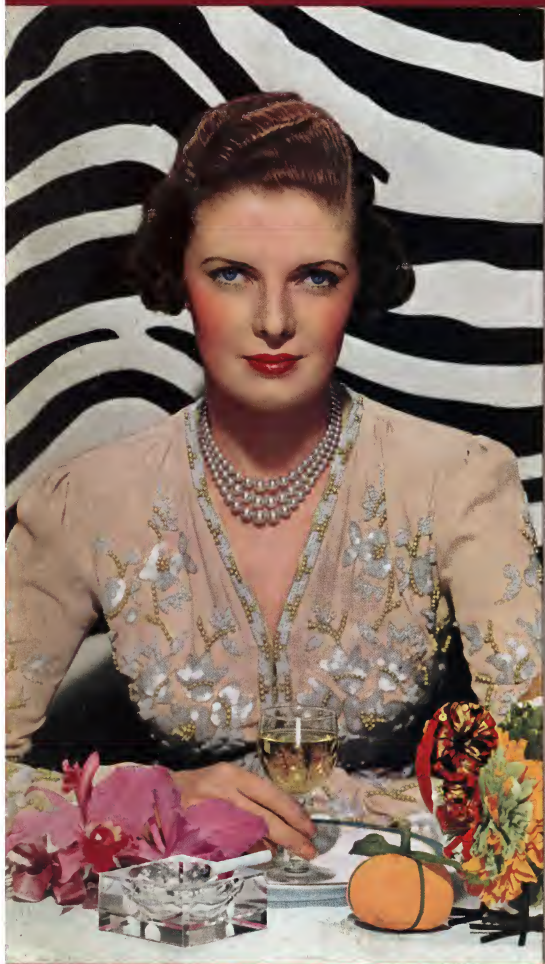
**COMPLETE
BOOK-LENGTH
NOVEL**
by
PHILIP WYLIE

Beginning
"Neighbor to the Sky"
by
**GLADYS HASTY
CARROLL**

Author of "As the Earth Turns"

Novelette
by
LUCIAN CARY

**KATHARINE BRUSH
CARL SANDBURG**



NET CIRCULATION THIS ISSUE MORE THAN 1,000,000

Gentlemen . . a taste-full whiskey

WITH NO RAW AFTER-TASTE!

This reveals all!

Swallow a few drops of Old Schenley Whiskey, straight. First, you get that rich, full taste of fine whiskey. Then, as it goes down, you get that satin-smooth warming "feel" in your throat. And now . . . the surprise! Instead of a raw after-taste, you get a pleasant sense of lingering mellowness, subdued and mildly warming.

It is the *after-taste* that reveals the true character of a whiskey. Old Schenley is a whiskey with *no raw after-taste* — coveted by all except those few who drink for a terrific "kick." Pour your own and *prove* it.



*Pour it yourself
and prove it!*

Photographed in the Cocktail Terrace of New York's St. Regis Hotel

Copyright 1936, Schenley Distributors, Inc., New York



"THANK YOU, SCHENLEY" say New York's bartenders For the richest blended whiskey they've ever tasted — and Schenley's exclusive Protect-All Bottle, the first adequate, unrefillable, free-pouring bottle. It protects against substitution — the barman against suspicion.



The House of Schenley proudly presents—Old Schenley Brand . . . First, it is the whiskey with no raw after-taste. . . Second, it is kind to you the next morning if used in moderation . . . Third, it provides you sure protection against substitution. Truly, Old Schenley is the Blend of your Desires!

OLD SCHENLEY IS THE NAME!

BLENDED WHISKEY

The Blend of your Desires. The straight whiskeys in this product are 8 years or more old, 40% straight whiskey and 60% neutral spirits distilled from American grain. In the Schenley Protect-All Bottle, 86.8 Proof

A Spinner of Charms

[UNTIL SHE SMILES]



She evades close-ups . . . Dingy teeth and tender gums destroy her charm . . . She ignored the warning of "Pink Tooth Brush"

WHEREVER she goes, whatever she does, admiring and envious eyes follow this lovely girl—until she smiles! And then, shock and disillusionment and only the ghost of beauty.

It seems impossible that one so fair and so fastidious should let dingy teeth and tender gums cloud her loveliness. And yet how often it happens—and how often you have seen it happen.

"PINK TOOTH BRUSH" IS A WARNING

Just a little tinge of "pink" on your tooth brush. It doesn't look serious. It doesn't seem important. But from this small beginning sometimes develops a real dental

tragedy. Beauty is marred. Dull and dingy teeth and tender gums can exact heavy penalties. And that's why your dentist advises, "Don't let gum troubles start!"

At the very first tinge of "pink" upon your tooth brush, go directly to your dentist. He may find your gums in a serious condition. But he is far more likely to find just a common case of "too much soft food"—gums robbed of the work they need by our modern menus—gums grown lazy, tender, and sensitive. And his advice should be followed to the letter—better care, more stimulation, and usually Ipana Tooth Paste and massage.

Ipana and massage is approved by modern

dentistry. And your first few days with Ipana will tell you why. Rub a little Ipana into your gums every time you brush your teeth. Almost at once, your gums improve, new circulation wakens sluggish tissues. For Ipana is especially designed to help the gums as well as clean the teeth.

Try this sensible suggestion of your dentist. Start with Ipana and massage today. Feel your gums grow firmer. See your teeth grow whiter. Close the door to really serious gum disorders. Keep your smile as it should be—lovely, bright, sparkling.





GENERAL  ELECTRIC

MAZDA LAMPS
now only

15¢

15-25-40-60 WATT SIZES



**THEY STAY
BRIGHTER LONGER**

General Electric makes a 10 cent lamp, too!
It is the best lamp you can buy at the price.
7½, 15, 30 and 60-watt sizes. Each dime
lamp is marked like this GE

DECEMBER
VOL. 68

REDBOOK
MAGAZINE

1936
No. 2

EDWIN BALMER, Editor

Associate Editors, DONALD KENNICOTT and VOLDEMAR VETLUGUIN
SID L. HYDEMAN, Art Editor

REDBOOK'S NOVEL OF THE MONTH

Second Honeymoon Philip Wylie 129
COMPLETE IN THIS ISSUE — BOOK-LENGTH — 50,000 WORDS

REDBOOK'S NOVELETTE OF THE MONTH

Exactly the Right Girl Lucian Cary 22

THREE SERIALS

Neighbor to the Sky Gladys Hasty Carroll 16
Free Woman Katharine Brush 30
Maid of Money Edwin Balmer and Frederick Van Ryn 42

SEVEN SHORT STORIES

Magnificent Gesture Frederick Nebel 34
Nothing to Get Mad About Baird Hall 47
The Idol Chapin Howard 48
The Hollow Dragon Ellery Queen 50
Don't Telegraph—Writel Alec Rackowe 55
Triangle Squared Arthur Pound 56
Romance, 1936 Nancy Barnes 60

THREE ARTICLES

Turkey in the White House Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen 15
Getting Away from It All Morris Markey 26
Darling of Destiny Carl Sandburg 38

THREE SPECIAL FEATURES

Marta Abba Ogden Nash 7
The Great Levee Lucius Beebe 8
Redbook's Picture of the Month H. N. Swanson 10

DEPARTMENTS

Popularity Angelo Patri 122
Redbook's School Directory 122

Cover: Natural-color photograph by Ruzzie Green
(Gown by Brenner Joseph and White)

The short stories, serials and novels printed herein are fiction and intended as such. They do not refer to real characters or actual events. If the name of any living person is used, it is a coincidence.

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The Redbook School Directory will be found on pages 122 through 126.



"The loser's stuck to take her home"



THE very boys who used to seek her out, now match to see who will be "stuck" to take her home. That's what halitosis (bad breath) can do to a girl, without her ever suspecting the reason for the sudden change in her fortunes. Too bad that this offensive condition doesn't announce itself to the victim instead of to the victim's friends.

Listerine's Four Benefits

Why offend others needlessly? To put yourself on the agreeable side, before social and business engagements rinse the mouth with Listerine, the quick deodorant. Millions of people use Listerine every day sim-

ply because of its wholly delightful effect.

When you use Listerine in your mouth, four things happen:

- (1) Fermentation of tiny food particles (the major cause of breath odors) is instantly halted.
- (2) Decaying matter is swept from large areas on mouth, gum, and tooth surfaces.
- (3) Millions of bacteria capable of causing odors are destroyed outright.
- (4) The breath itself, indeed the entire mouth, is freshened and sweetened.

For Definite Results

If you would be safe rather than sorry, agreeable rather than offensive, use Listerine and Listerine only for oral hygiene. Use it particularly before all business and social engagements. For fifty years, Listerine has been outstanding for its marked deodorant power.

LAMBERT PHARMACAL COMPANY
St. Louis, Missouri

If you like Listerine Antiseptic, chances are you'll like Listerine Tooth Paste. More than $\frac{1}{4}$ pound in the big, double-size tube for 40¢. Regular size, 25¢.



O. HENRY



MARY HASTINGS BRADLEY



PEARL S. BUCK



IN NEXT MONTH'S

REDBOOK

AT first we refused to believe it.

"A series of newly discovered stories by O. HENRY?"

We were extremely skeptical. "Read it," they begged. We agreed reluctantly. We read it. We read it with bated breath. We were afraid to miss a single line. Before we were half through, we became convinced that the manuscript in our hands was "genuine O. Henry." An "early" O. Henry, at that, O. Henry of the years when Mark Twain was exercising a considerable influence on America's greatest short-story writer. Do we need to add that we bought that series of stories by O. Henry? Did you ever hear of an art collector who would pass the chance of buying a Rembrandt?

Begin reading this series of great and unforgettable stories in our next issue.

Last March we offered one thousand dollars for the best letter dealing with "Pattern for Three," by MARY HASTINGS BRADLEY (Redbook's Complete Book-length Novel for March, 1936). We received fifteen thousand letters. Encouraged by this unprecedented expression of interest on the part of our readers,

Mrs. Bradley has written for us a sequel to "Pattern for Three." It's likewise a complete book-length (50,000 words) novel.

Likewise in our next issue: a Christmas novelette (complete in one issue) by PEARL S. BUCK; "Satan from Grand Rapids" by MILTON MacKAYE (Melvin Purvis' collaborator on "Under Secret Order"), the story of one of the most puzzling crimes of modern times; the first of a series of articles on our hospitals by MORRIS MARKEY (America's First Reporter is as thorough as usual in this exposé of one of America's greatest shortcomings); short stories, articles and special features by DAVID GARTH (what did we tell you about that young man a year ago?), COREY FORD, CHARLES HANSON TOWNE, HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON and others; and continued novels by GLADYS HASTY CARROLL, EDWIN BALMER and FREDERICK VAN RYN.

*Be sure to read
in this Issue*

"SECOND HONEYMOON"

**A Complete
Book-length Novel**

by

**PHILIP
WYLIE**

Tomorrow's exciting literary events
are in today's Redbook.

First Pictures & Details About the NEW PLYMOUTH

THE BIGGEST, ROOMIEST PLYMOUTH EVER BUILT—New Sound-proofing of Steel Roof and Floor...Shuts Out Road Noises...New Safety Interior...Entire body Pillowed on Live Rubber...Eliminates Vibration and Rumble...New Airplane-type Shock-Absorbers...New "Hushed Ride"...Tests Show 18 to 24 Miles Per Gallon of Gas.



ALL STEEL! Solid steel top... sides, doors, floors... and all reinforcing... for safety!

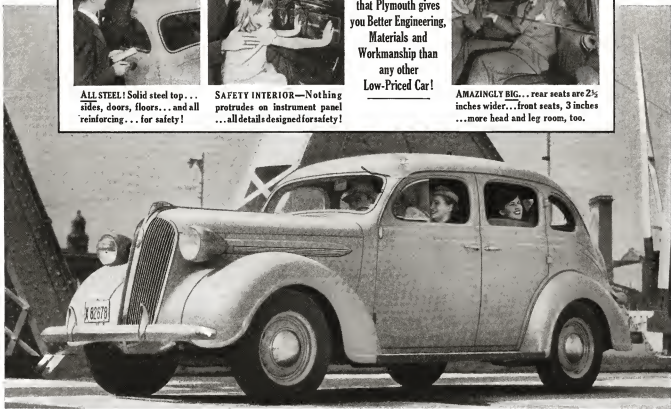


SAFETY INTERIOR—Nothing protrudes on instrument panel... all details designed for safety!

We believe you'll find after Careful Inspection that Plymouth gives you Better Engineering, Materials and Workmanship than any other Low-Priced Car!



AMAZINGLY BIG... rear seats are 2½ inches wider... front seats, 3 inches... more head and leg room, too.



GREATEST value in all history... great new features:

Look: the new Safety Interior... new Scientific Sound-Proofing... new Rubber Body Mountings... new Airplane-type shock-absorbers... a new "Hushed Ride"... new Hypoid

rear axle, formerly used only in costly cars... famous Floating Power engine mountings.

EASY TO BUY! Terms as low as \$25 a month offered by Commercial Credit Company through Chrysler, De Soto or Dodge dealers. **PLYMOUTH DIVISION OF CHRYSLER CORP.**

SAVE MONEY!

This beautiful, big 1937 Plymouth is priced with the lowest... and saves you real money on gas, oil, tires and upkeep.



PLYMOUTH

The Best Buy of All Three!



"When you hear the musical note it will be exactly . . ." Time for Fred Allen's program! You're listening to another station! But you simply reach over to the radio . . . whirl a dial like that on an automatic telephone . . . and you're one of the crowd entering "Town Hall." That's Philco Automatic Tuning . . . so simple that you grasp it at a glance . . . so perfect that neither eye nor ear can equal the accuracy with which it tunes. Super-convenience . . . plus precision that releases all the beauty of Philco High-Fidelity Tone . . . makes your living-room the studio in which the artists are performing! American stations tuned automatically . . . foreign stations tuned by name! Overseas short-wave stations are no longer "numbers." You'll find London . . . Berlin . . . Paris . . . South American and Asiatic stations named and located on the Philco Spread-Band Dial . . . and spread six times farther apart to insure more dependable reception! That's the combination of convenience Philco provides for 1937!

FRED ALLEN and PORTLAND HUFFA...
Stars of "Town Hall Variety" on the
Ed Hopkins and Joyce Program.

THE FOUR MOTHERS
... The New Vocal Quartet

LOUIS MUCCI and the WESTONS
... The New Vocal Quartet

LANNY ROSS, of the Maxwell House Show Boat...

MAINE GRAY...
Queen of Philco's "Red Hot" Program!

SHEP FIELDS' Rapping Kestrel Orchestra
on the Mutual Broadcasting System

On the Philco 116X De Luxe... call letters of your favorite American stations are inserted where the mythical call letters appear above. One twirl tunes the station with un-failing precision and true High-Fidelity Tone. "Boom" is eliminated by Acoustic Clarifiers... and every note brought to ear level by the Philco Inclined Sounding Board. Five Spread-Band Tuning Ranges cover all that's interesting in the air... while the Philco Foreign Tuning System and High-Efficiency Aerial double the foreign stations you can get and enjoy! See the classified telephone directory for your Philco dealer. Buy, if you choose, on the Philco Commercial Credit Easy Payment Plan.

PHILCO

A Musical Instrument of Quality

FIFTY-TWO MODELS \$20 TO \$600

PHILCO REPLACEMENT TUBES IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE
OF ANY RADIO... SPECIFY A PHILCO FOR YOUR AUTOMOBILE



PHILCO 116X De LUXE*... \$195 (Less Aerial)

*Sold only with Philco High-Efficiency Aerial
to insure greatest foreign reception.

IN TUNE WITH OUR TIMES



Photo by
Luxardo, Roma



I'm a League of Nations dream.
Russian is my name and theme.
Gay Parisian is my author,
British is my bringer-forther.
My adapter and translator,
He's a shrewd United Stater,
While my lead is acted wittily
By a charming girl from Italy.
Whether I succeed or not,
Boy, am I a melting-pot!

Ogden Nash

MARTA ABBA

YES, it's "Marta," not "Martha." The lady happens to be an Italian. Up to a few weeks ago her name, famous in Europe, meant nothing here. Now she's a full-fledged Broadway star, for she is appearing in "Tovarich," a Robert E. Sherwood adaptation of Jacques Deval's play, presented in New York City by Gilbert Miller. For further details read Mr. Nash's verse.



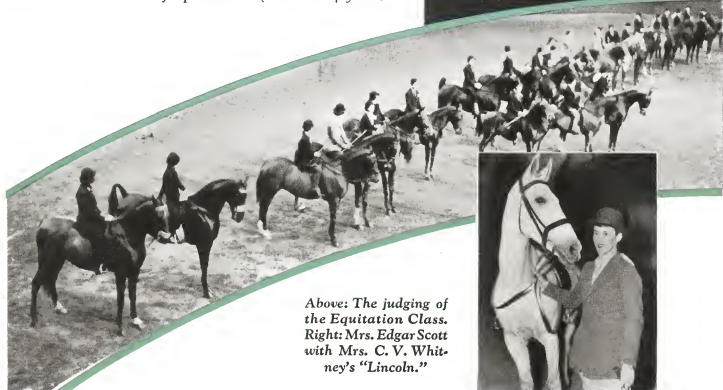
THE GREAT LEVEE

by LUCIUS BEEBE

SO the old-time glamour, the splash and swank of New York society is on the wane, is it? Vanished with Ward McAllister's stewardship to Mrs. Astor, the summertime supremacy of Newport, and the tradition of after-theater supper off terrapin stew and a bottle of Perrier Jouet '04 at Sherry's? One with Easter Parade on Fifth Avenue, Peacock Alley at the old Waldorf and the uncommonly tall top hats of Evander Berry Wall? Changing times and a necessitous generation have swept into the discard the paraded magnificence of the world's most opulent metropolis, have they?

If you are possessed of this dreary notion, it might be as well to take in the spectacle at Madison Square Garden any one of the early November evenings while the National Horse-show is in progress.

For there, when the competing cavalry teams of the United States and from foreign nations rein in at the salute for the playing of their national anthems, is perpetuated the vivid and orchidaceous tradition of New York's most spectacular levee, an event which dominates the Manhattan "season," and which for more than half a century has admitted as a peer in its official nature only the annual first night of the Metropolitan Opera. Since the early nineties, when the horse-show was held beneath the Moorish towers and gilded Diana of an earlier Madison Square Garden, and audiences trained admiring jorgnons on Lily Langtry and the Duchess of Marlborough who had been Consuelo Vanderbilt, and down to the momentary present, it has been a foregathering of Gotham's most lavishly upholstered (Please turn to page 104.)



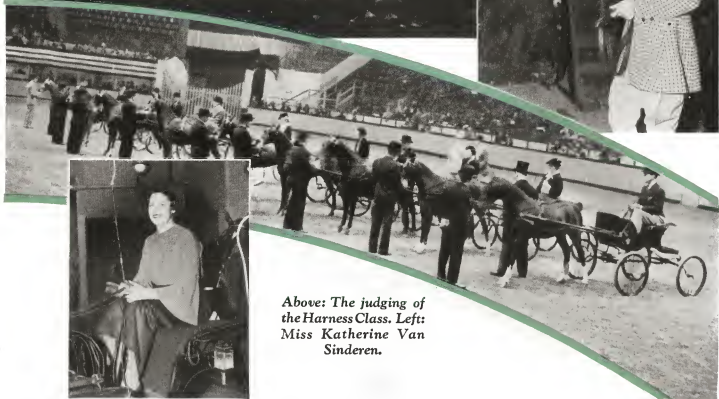
Above: The judging of the Equitation Class.
Right: Mrs. Edgar Scott with Mrs. C. V. Whitney's "Lincoln."





Left: The old-time glamour. . . . The general view of the National Horse-show at Madison Square Garden.

Below: Mrs. John Hay Whitney, universally recognized as one of America's greatest horsewomen.



Above: The judging of the Harness Class. Left: Miss Katherine Van Sinderen.



REDBOOK'S PICTURE OF THE MONTH

by
H. N.
SWANSON

The handsome officer is Errol Flynn, the beautiful lady Olivia de Havilland.



"THE Charge of the Light Brigade" is a phrase that has stuck in our memories ever since schoolbook days. It was a bright page out of our histories, one on which was written the exploits of a memorable band of men who were almost totally annihilated for an ideal. The golden text we children derived from this military milestone was that nothing could stand against courage, the courage of honest conviction.

Now Warner Brothers have produced an exciting, thrilling picture under this title. It makes it clear how an English officer, champing at the bit to avenge a massacre, had the temerity to reverse his superior officer's orders and fire his men into charging into the very jaws of hell. . . . But all this sounds as if we were trying to get out a press book on this show, instead (Please turn to page 12)



A scene from "The Charge of the Light Brigade."

Full-length visible ink supply

Holds 102% more ink THAN OLD-STYLE

(Less than actual size)

Jean Abbey

Style Commentator and Shopper for Woman's Home Companion

DISCOVERS AMERICA'S MOST-WANTED CHRISTMAS GIFTS!

Trust Jean Abbey to find the new, the smart, the exciting in Christmas Gifts! Her job is to "shop" 56 of America's finest stores in 15 cities, to single out unusually choice values, to report her recommendations in weekly radio broadcasts. By following her reliable selections, millions of shoppers save time, effort and money.

For Christmas 1936, Jean Abbey gives top honors to Parker's thrilling Vacumatic Pen—the shimmering Laminated Pearl and Jet style creation that has captivated all America! Because of its Full-length Visible Ink Supply, this Pen warns days ahead if it's running low—never goes dry against your will. It holds 102% more ink than old-style, and its Scratch-Proof Point of Platinum and Gold entirely ends "pen-drag."

"Here," says Miss Abbey, "are my recommendations for Christmas Gifts, selected from Parker's many lovely creations."

at \$3.50 Parker DeLuxe Challenger Pen—regular \$5 Duofold quality. Leverless filler. Four colors. With Pencil to match, complete SET in Christmas Gift Box, only \$5.00.

at \$5 Parker Vacumatic Pen—In Transparent Mottled Pearl. With Pencil to match, complete SET in Gift Box, \$7.50.

at \$5.25 Parker Desk Set (SD)—Smart Chrome-finished Metal Base (3 3/4" x 3 3/4") inlaid with Ivory or Black enamel. \$2.75 Parker Challenger Pen included.

at \$7.50 Celebrated Parker Vacumatic Pen—in exclusive Laminated Pearl Style. With Pencil to match, complete SET in Gift Box, \$11.00.

at \$10 New Parker Vacumatic Pen (Over-size or Slender Senior)—in exclusive Laminated Pearl style. With

Pencil to match, complete SET in new Moderne Gift Box, \$15.00.

at \$11.50 Parker Desk Set (NB)—Oval Marble Base (1 1/2" x 3 1/4") lovely Violet Brocatelle in Gilt Frame, with newest Desk Set Invention, the Sealomatic Rocker Bowl. \$5 Vacumatic Pen included.

at \$20 Parker Double Desk Set (BBM)—rectangular Base of Italian Marble (7" x 4 1/2"), two Sealomatic Bowls. \$11 Vacumatic Pen and Pencil Set included.

The Parker Pen Company, Janesville, Wis.

Merry Christmas!

Parker

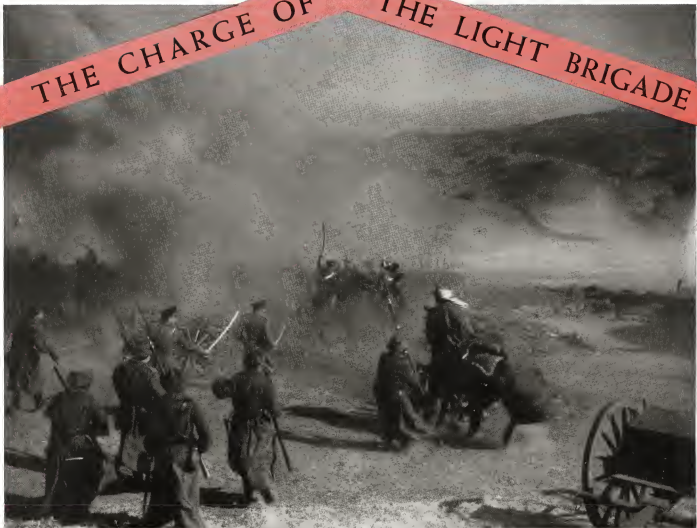
VACUMATIC

GUARANTEED MECHANICAL PERMANENT

Junior, \$5. Over-Size, \$10

Pen, \$2.50. Pen, \$3.50 and \$5

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE



According to that skeptical French General, it was "magnificent" but it wasn't "war." According to Warner Brothers, the whole thing is a natural for Errol Flynn.

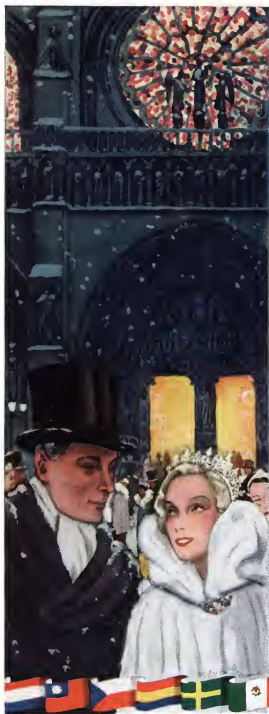


of merely telling you it is one of the important pictures of the new season — one you should see.

The direction and the writing in this picture should be starred, along with Errol Flynn. Michael Curtiz has handled his scenes beautifully. Michael Jacoby, who conceived the original story based on Tennyson's poem, wrote a really strong screen play with Rowland Leigh. Since it will have an epic appeal for audiences everywhere in the United Kingdom, its foreign grosses

look assured, and its box-office fate therefore certain to be a happy one.

Errol Flynn was discovered in the Warners' English studios and brought to Hollywood for his first big starring chance in "Captain Blood." In it he played the rôle of a pirate with a little too dazzling a display of teeth and a little too much nervous bounce to suit this reviewer. However, in his second effort there is assurance in everything he does. (Please turn to page 105)



ALL THE WORLD SAYS

"Merry Christmas"
WITH THE
FRAGRANCE
Gemey

The Frenchman's "Joyeux Noël," the Hawaiian's "Melika Maka," the Italian's "Buon Natale"—they all mean "Merry Christmas!" And in 75 lands the men who know what women want will say "Merry Christmas" this season with ...fragrance Gemey.

For this young, fresh, joyous perfume has charmed its way into the feminine hearts of five continents. And Richard Hudnut now presents America with these gifts of glamor... powders and perfume, compacts and cologne...all distinguished by this single thread of fragrance Gemey!

See the gay gift showing at your nearest perfume counter. Find the one that's right for her! Prices range from \$1 to \$101. She'll be thrilled to join the company of the world's loveliest women, the women who know...and wear...fragrance Gemey!

In crystal clear dressing table flacons...\$2.50, \$4.50 and \$15. Special Stocking-Gift size...\$1.



by **RICHARD HUDNUT**

Paris... London... New York... Toronto... Buenos Aires
Mexico City... Berlin... Budapest... Capetown... Sydney
Shanghai... Rio de Janeiro... Havana... Bucharest... Vienna

GOD JUL • STOCKHOLM • MELIKA MAK • HONOLULU • FELICES PASCUAL • MEXICO CITY



"To Mary with love"—a handsome Cigarette Case, Lipstick, Double Vanity, \$10



An intimate gift to last all year—eight personal luxuries that breathe Gemey, \$10



She's "tops"—and so is your gift—this slim gold-plated Cigarette Vanity, \$7.50



Tip to a Man-in-a-quandary—Gemey Perfume, Face Powder, Compact, \$3.50

PARIS • JOYEUX NOËL • LONDON • MERRY CHRISTMAS • ROME • BUON NATALE • VIENNA • FRÖHLICHE WEIHNACHTEN

Two gifts—Gemey Perfume, world-beloved—Gemey Powder, filmy-fine, \$2.25

A gala giftbox—five "can't-do-withouts," in the world-favored fragrance Gemey, \$5

For her dressing-table: Fragrance Gemey with a luxury De Villbiss atomizer, \$5

Glamor for glamorous girls: Double Compact, \$2, Triple Vanity with lipstick, \$2.75

"Camay is the easier way to a Lovely Skin"

SAYS THIS CHARMING ALABAMA BRIDE



BIRMINGHAM, ALA.

*I'm devoted to Camay—it is the quickest
and best daily beauty treatment I know. That's
why I say it is the easier way to a lovely skin.*

Sincerely,

*(Signed) HELOISE HEERMANCE
(Mrs. Clayton Heermance, Jr.)*

Sept. 2, 1936

HERE's a bride of the deep South—lovely Heloise Heermance of Alabama. Azure eyed, hair the color of ripe wheat in the sun, a Dresden doll complexion—what a brilliant bridal dower from Nature is hers! From Nature? Well, not entirely—if you'll take the word of this young bride. "If you think my skin's nice, then I must tell you my secret. Frankly, it's Camay!"

You may not have hair like spun gold, nor the most beautiful eyes in the world, but you can *still* be radiantly attractive—with the charm of a lovely

skin. Why not do what thousands of girls are doing every day—get yourself a *Camay Complexion!*

It's astonishing what Camay can do for your skin. Just try the velvety touch of its fragrant lather—just *feel* the stim-

ulating effect as it cleanses so deeply, thoroughly—just *watch* your skin grow brighter and smoother. Mildness is a beauty soap's greatest asset. And Camay is mild—milder by actual proof in test after test—*definitely, indisputably milder*—a beauty soap that seems to soothe your skin as it cleanses.

It's to your advantage to look into Camay today—into the low price of it—into the lasting good effects of it! Buy a half-dozen cakes and begin today to stay young with Camay.

Camay is called Calay in Canada.



THE SOAP OF BEAUTIFUL WOMEN.



Photomontage by Lucarnick

UP until the year 1933, Thanksgiving in the White House was no occasion for particular rejoicing. For when the President of the United States sat down to give thanks for his holiday repast, he knew all too well that his turkey was to be spoiled, shortly thereafter, by indigestible lame duck.

Congress convened a few days later; and every other year it was a lame-duck session of retiring Representatives with nothing to worry about except oratory and bombast at the expense of the Executive. As a result the history of Thanksgiving in the White House in so far as it is haphazardly recorded, reads something like this:

President Monroe, 1823, spent the day writing message to Congress. Unable to attend church. . . . President Buchanan, 1857, long conference with Governor Walker of Kansas over influx of slave-traders as a result of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. . . . President Grant, 1876, unable to receive visitors; spent day writing message to Congress. . . . President McKinley, 1900, spent day working on message to Congress and considering whether to recommend pensions for ex-slaves. The next day Mrs. McKinley, bored, left for a shopping expedition in New York. . . . President Harding, 1921, signed bills at the Capitol all morning, dined at noon with his family, and informally away from the White House at night. . . . President Coolidge, 1927, rose at his usual hour, took his setting-up exercises, shaved himself, breakfasted with Mrs. Coolidge, then retired to his study to work on his message to Congress. . . . President Hoover, 1930, rose at six A.M., played handball, breakfasted at eight, attended Friends' Meeting, spent the remainder of the day writing his annual message.

There were some exceptions to this rule, of course, among them Theodore Roosevelt, who in 1902 managed to finish

his message to Congress ahead of time, took a long horseback ride with his family and did not even go near the executive offices. On that day, history records, "mice appeared in the executive offices, though it was a new building."

So on the whole, Thanksgiving Day, at least for the President himself, was nothing to be very thankful for. And if there ever is canonized a patron saint for Thanksgiving Day, the man who will get the unanimous vote of the Presidents of the United States is Senator George Norris of Nebraska. For Norris it was who inspired and pushed through Congress the Twentieth Amendment, abolishing lame-duck sessions of Congress. Beginning with the lucky Mr. F. D. Roosevelt, Congress meets not immediately after Thanksgiving, but on January 3.

Despite the century-long handicap of Congress, however, Thanksgiving gradually has become a gayer and more festive occasion, at least for the White House family, if not always for the President. As a matter of fact, Thanksgiving is a relatively recent festival as far as Washington is concerned; for although the first Thanksgiving Day in America was held in 1621, the capital turned up its nose at the celebration, regarding it as belonging to Puritan New England and therefore provincial.

George Washington celebrated Thanksgiving at Valley Forge with General Lafayette in 1777; after the Constitution was adopted in 1789, he asked that Congress set aside a holiday to be observed by the entire country. But there was immediate and vigorous opposition. The Father of his Country was accused of desiring to exercise undue Federal power. Chief complainants were the Democrats, who talked so much about States' rights then, and so little now. Thanks to their opposition, therefore, Thanksgiving Day did not become (Please turn to page 78)



Turkey in the White House

by
**DREW
PEARSON**
and
**ROBERT
S. ALLEN**



WE feel truly privileged to publish this rich and colorful novel by the highly gifted author of "As the Earth Turns."
— *The Editors*

JEFF GILMAN came out of the house from saying good-by to the womenfolk. He carried two battered brown leather bags, and his small curtained touring-car stood waiting for him in the driveway. It was very early, and cold for a spring morning. The sun had just risen and the new moon not yet set. The grass of the yard was white with frost. Jeff's breath showed on the air above his sheepskin collar.

The door had no more than closed behind him than it opened again, and Mary, his mother, followed him onto the step. He turned to smile down over his shoulder at her.

"You'd better get back in where it's warm."
She stood bare-armed, looking at him. His smile did not deceive her. She made as if to say something and then shook her head. Reaching up, she took his face between her hands, and when she let him go, his cheek had left a mark on hers. It was clear she had embarrassed them both. She hurried in.

Jeff went toward the car. Two of his brothers stood there. One took his bags and put them in on the back seat. The other bent over the steering-wheel, adjusting the spark.

"She hitting all right, Bob?"

"Yeh. She's fine. Maybe a mite of—"

"She better be. She's got to make three hundred miles."

"You'll have to watch the water."

"I'll watch it. . . . Well, so long, Bob. Don't take any wooden nickels. See you do as well as I would."

"Couldn't very well do worse. So long. You'll get back this way before a great while, I suppose."



MARGERY'S VOICE HELD HIM AS NO OTHER SOUND EVER HAD.

NEIGHBOR to the

"Another year, maybe. So long, Luke."

Luke finished tucking in the blanket where it would protect the back seat from the bags. He slammed the door, and shook it to be sure that it was fast. Then he came up slowly beside Jeff.

"Good luck, boy. . . . Seems like an awful sudden start you're making."

Jeff laughed shortly.

"Anything looks sudden to you, Luke, that hasn't been planned a lifetime. You ought to know by now I'm not made that way. When I'm ready for a job, I'm going after it. I've hung around here long enough." He started ahead. "Ever since July."

"Hasn't been long for us," Luke said. "Seems to me as if you'd just

come. There's still a lot of things I was kind of hoping we'd get around to do. We never fished Thompson's brook but that once, and we didn't get far with cleaning up down at the mill—"

"No," Jeff answered. "Too much of the time I've been other ways occupied." His hand gripped the brake, letting it off. When he turned his face toward Luke, it was bleak with uncertainty and blinding hurt. "Sometime we'll do it all, carpenter. Maybe next time I get home—we'll see more of each other."

"I'll count on that, boy. You— Anything you need?"

"No, for once, Luke. Thanks."

"Sure you'd better go?"

"Damned sure."

"You'll find something, you think, an off-season like this?"

"I'll find something." He roused himself, adding as easily as he could: "There's always lumbering going on down East, one kind or another."

"Well—send us word as soon as you're located."

"I'll do that. . . . So long, carpenter."

The car moved out of the driveway and down the lane. Jeff's hand flashed at the isinglass window in his side curtain, and Luke and Bob swung their hands in reply. The high banks of the lane obscured car and all. They heard the roar of the engine as it pulled through the sand ruts into the main road.

"A mite too much carbon there," Bob said.

"You ought to have cleaned it out."

"So you say," Bob shrugged. "Anybody can't build a new car between nine o'clock at night and five o'clock in the morning. I didn't get more than three hours' sleep as it was."

They shook themselves, and went toward the shed.

"What do you figure Jeff took such a sudden start for?" Bob asked, clanking rusty chains on the barn cellar stairs. "Last night at supper-time his bags were still buried up in the shed chamber. Come sunrise, and he's gone. How do you account for it?"

Luke did not answer. Bob could hear his breathing, deep and slow, at the end of the long, dim, light-streaked building. He was collecting saw, plane, hammer, a bit, a few screws, and a bag of nails from his tool-kit underneath the bench.

"Girl trouble?" Bob persisted. "You don't think it could be the star boarder got fed up with his company? Or he got fed up with hers, more like it. Maybe even he's tired of looking at a face that's always got a headache, and hearing how he could improve his grammar. Before I'd let a schoolma'am drive me out, though! He must be soft—"

"All right," Luke said, straightening. "All right, Bob. That'll do now. You're talking a mile over your head. Clear out of here and 'tend your traps, and hold your tongue about things you don't know anything about—"

"Oh, don't I!"

"Clear out, I told you."

Bob went, gangling, red-headed seventeen, traps swinging from his hand, a broad grin on his face. A few minutes later Luke came out into the thin sunshine. He was not smiling. His face was grave and anxious; a broad, wind-browned, dully pink face, most distinguished for a singular quality of unconscious virtue, rooting him deep, gently stubborn, wholly uncompromising, in his own



"I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND MY COMING OVER HERE. I HAD TO SEE YOU ALONE. I HAD TO TALK WITH YOU."

SKY *by* GLADYS HASTY CARROLL

natural goodness. Deliberately he transferred self and tools through the barn into the pasture.

Mary threw up a kitchen window and called: "Luke! Where are you going?"

"Up to the cabin."

"What can you do there this early in the year?"

"There's still some work on the inside."

"Why, you haven't finished your breakfast."

"Yes, I'm all done."

"You didn't even touch it, Luke—"

He kept on steadily, following the cowpath to the brook, following the brook through the pine-sprinkled valley between the

Ridges and up into a clearing among the white birch trees. Here lay the giant boulder which had served as a boundary marker on Gilman property since the first deed was written. Here stood the tall, horny black hackmatack of at least a hundred and fifty winters. Here stood also the shell of a cabin which Luke was building for his oldest brother Harrison, a lawyer now, a member of the New York bar.

Gently, tentatively, Luke approached the cabin much as he might have a horse which had run wild all season. He laid down his tools, and put out his hand to the logs, not going too close, stroking them. The weather had turned them nut-brown and smooth as velvet. He felt for his key and turned it in the lock.

The hinges gave. There was no binding. Everything had kept well and was as he had left it. He drew a long breath softly, smiling. A low whistle swelled in his throat, and he fingered the door-frame for a nail which might have snapped with the cold. He reached for his hammer. He was on the job again.

As he worked, the sun traveled up the sky and started down the other side. He did not stop for dinner, for he had none with him; but as it grew warmer, he laid off his round black cap, plaid mackinaw and sweater. Bareheaded, in checkered shirt, he looked younger, and not so well-padded, though filled out more than is usual for twenty-three. It was because of his work and

the way he did it—his plane and saw always moving evenly, with long, smooth strokes, as a born painter handles a brush, his hammer-blows falling lightly in a rhythm that neighbors recognized as his a mile away. "That's Luke Gilman's hammer. Hear how it goes? You can always tell." His body moved naturally with his tool, not jerked and jarred by it. People called him Carpenter because he was so much one with what he did. He liked that, proud of his trade, as his father had prophesied he would be.

"No man with a trade has to ask quarter of anybody," Big Luke had often said. "He's got security. He can go where he will over the face of the earth, and stop wherever he chooses. Always there will be work for his hands and bread for his mouth."

BIG LUKE'S sons and all the boys in the neighborhood had heard the same words a good many times, but they had not sounded alike to all of them. Harrison worked awhile with Tom Brule to learn masonry, but it had not been right for Harrison: nothing but books did for him; he often said now that just to pass a brick wall made him retch, and he pitied every poor devil that ever had to give a stir to mortar. Jeff had learned saw-mill firing and practised it, but he went where the mills went, not where he willed, and working periods were uncertain; it had not brought him security nor peace; perhaps nothing ever would, to Jeff. Already Bob made motors run when no one else could, but he would never master a machinist's trade so long as it had to be learned by steady application and by giving himself into the hands of some one else. Bob was too sure he knew what should be done and how to do it, and his plans for his life changed too often; one day he hung a sign on the carriage-house and repaired engines; the next week he spent night and day on a model airplane; and by summer he was saving for a deep-sea fishing license and building lobster-traps. He was only seventeen, but he would never change; it was in the blood; Big Luke's two brothers, Ben and Thomas, both living up the road a piece, had always been the same. It was no doubt the case of Ben and Thomas which had set Big Luke to thinking so much of what a trade could do for a man.

None of the other boys who grew up with Big Luke's sons had bothered with a trade. Big Luke had thought Ernie Kilbourne had a knack with mending furniture and would profit by a year with old Isaac Hatch, who made better chairs by his kitchen stove than ever came out of Grand Rapids. But Ernie went to clerking in the chain grocery store in the village, and by the time he married Big Luke's daughter Bess, he was the manager; Ernie was doing very well. Luke thought of the other boys—Earl Stacy, who had studied with Harrison to be a lawyer; he would

never be what Harrison was, for he did not have what Harrison had; but his shingle was out in Portsmouth—Luke saw it whenever he drove down to pick out his lumber at the yards. Earl's brother Victor was teaching music in the Concord schools; Walter Rideout had a garage somewhere around Bangor where his wife's family lived; Ted Steere announced for a broadcasting station up in Manchester, and sold radios too, when he could; Melvin Luce would finish a medical course this spring and interne at a Boston hospital; William Kilbourne, the one they had called "Girly," was making as much money as any of them, so far, managing a moving-picture theater in Sado, looking more slight and



HARRISON WOULD TELL INEZ: "I DON'T KNOW HOW FAR I'LL GET IN THE LAW,

fair than ever in his black suit with the silk braid down the trousers and the bow under his chin.

They had all done well. It was strange, though, Luke thought, how what they wanted had taken them, every one, away. He was the only man between twenty and thirty left in the neighborhood, barring poor silly Lemmy Steere, who had never learned how to talk; and Wes Posner, who had married at about the age Bob was now, and at twenty-seven looked and acted as if he were middle-aged, sick and poor and hopeless, with his fast-growing family on the town at least part of every winter. Only "Carpenter" was left. He did not have to go, unless he liked. As Big Luke had said, a man with a trade could stop where he chose. At least it was true of carpenters. And Luke chose to stop here.

He could not imagine any better place. He never left the township of Derwich, even for a day, but what he made all haste to get back. It was not that he did not feel equal to dealing with strangers and strange places, only that there was nothing there to interest him. All his affections and concerns were here on the Gilman farm. He left it, to be sure, to go out and put up buildings on the land of other men, but he came back at night, and the food he ate at noon was brought from here, and his tools belonged here and always went out and came back with him.

He liked the house his great-grandfather, old Sylvest Gilman, had built a hundred and fifty years before: big, squat, white-clap-

Luke remembered those four strange days. On the first of them Big Luke was up betimes and ate hungrily of Mary's fritters and fresh sausage. The men would start chopping on the Ridge that morning. His grandfather had watched those pines grow. Now they were in their prime. The wheels of the little-used mill beside the pond had been repaired; the new knives were sharp and shining; the crew waited to saw. There was mill business on the Gilman place once more. Big Luke was exuberant.

Mary said, standing by the window: "I dread to see the Ridges bare."

"Ho!" Big Luke cried. "That's nature, woman. Would you have a tree stand until it rots and falls?"

"They've always been there whenever I looked out," Mary said.

"Proves they must be ready for the ax," Big Luke told her. "Nothing lasts forever. There have to be changes. That's nature, I tell you."

HE strode out of the house and across the yard into the field, his boots beating the November frost off the brown grass. His two middle sons, Luke and Jeff, raced after him, as excited as he and less restrained. His eldest, Harrison, was already away at college, and Bob too young to be allowed along; but Luke and Jeff went.

"What can I do, Father? What can I do?"

"Hold your tongues. I've got men to see after first."

The boys kept very still after that, and followed him like a double shadow. Later he stationed Luke with a heavy peavey to give the logs a shove into the flooded brook when they had come down the slide and lay on the bank. Jeff he put on a raft in the brook with a pole to hasten the progress of each log downstream. They did not have much to do. The slide was so slippery with frost that morning that most of the logs shot all the way across the clearing and splashed into the current, rolling and rocking crazily. Luke, fascinated, leaned on his peavey watching them fly by, standing well back. Jeff, fascinated in his own way, grew hot and cold in the excitement of trying to give each one a push before it escaped him; he hopped up and down with eagerness, poling closer and closer to the tumult. Big Luke, starting up the slope toward the Ridge, his blue glance darting in all directions, saw what Jeff was doing and called back to him.

"Jeff!"

Jeff did not hear.

"Jeff!" Big Luke expected all who worked for him to listen for his voice.

"Jeff!"

"Yessir."

"Get over there where you belong. Far side—"

The next log, coming down the slope, struck Big Luke from the back.

Not started properly, it bounced off its course and crashed into the birches where he stood. He did not speak again. The men carried him home, and that night he died, still only in his fifties, fit as he had ever been, and full of intentions for his life. It was like Jeff never to forget that his father's last words had been to tell him what he should have heard before, what he should have known without being told; and it was no excuse in his mind that he was only twelve at the time, young to be working in the woods.

Big Luke lay for the next three days in the west bedroom. Mary said to Bess: "Do you remember what he said? He asked me, 'Would you have a tree stand until it rots and falls?' He said, 'Nothing lasts forever; that's nature.' He said that to me just before he went out."



BUT I'LL MAKE A GO OF IT." TO THE RIGHT ONE, A PERSON WOULD SPEAK OUT.

boarded, with seven rooms, one of them a kitchen, all the rest bedrooms—one, the west room downstairs, with appointments fine enough for its use in the emergency of funeral or of wedding. Old Sylvest's eight daughters had been married there. Big Luke, eldest son of the eighth daughter, and Mary Wallace had been married there, standing back to the fireplace, facing the deeply draped and tasseled canopy of the bed. This was because by then Mary's father had become too ill even to make a pretense of filling a pulpit, and thus the Wallaces no longer had a parsonage in which their daughter could be married. Prayers had been said over the body of old Sylvest in that west bedroom, over his wife Joanna and three of the girls, over Big Luke's only sister, and finally, ten years ago, over Big Luke himself.



LUKE SAW
JEFF—CALLED
TO HIM... THE
NEXT LOG STRUCK
LUKE FROM THE BACK.

A few years later Bess was married in the west room. Luke and Jeff took down the four-poster for her wedding and built an evergreen arch where it had stood. But Mary Gilman made them put the bed back before nightfall, before Bess and Ernie had fairly gone, while the wind had not yet blown the confetti off the doorstep. It was as if Mary were afraid

the walls might collapse without the shadows of those posts to hold them up.

Luke liked that room. He liked his own upstairs, the one Jeff shared with him when he was home. He would be alone in it tonight. He liked his grandmother's, the middle back, where she sat all day, now she had lost the use of her right arm and leg, surrounded by her own odds and ends of furniture. He liked the kitchen. He supposed he liked the kitchen best.

Other Gilmans had before him. Old Sylvest had built it for convenience in cooking and eating, and to the deuce with ceremony; he wanted a place where he could smell his food, keep his feet warm, set out chairs for his neighbors, read his Bible and histories, his Milton, Shakespeare and Thackeray, and take his evening nap. Big Luke had enjoyed the same privileges. And Luke did. It made a room no one would stay long away from, even if the house had boasted a dozen parlors and sitting-rooms.

Luke liked not only the house, but the long shed which linked it with the barn, the barn itself and the cows swaying lazily inside it, chewing, the millions of dust specks whirled into a rainbow by a stream of sunshine, the scent of the hay and the look of the rafters hung with cobwebs.

Luke liked the yard. It sloped down gently from step to driveway. Small children were always sliding there; late years they were Bess' Pete and Tommy, and before long now the little one—Julie—would be out on her sled whenever Bess brought her home. The woodbine grew over the windows all summer long, and when the leaves fell off, birds came for the berries, tapping cheerily against the glass, until there was nothing left but a lace-work of stems. It was a fine, snug yard the year around.

A fine farm, too—sixty acres of it, the biggest in the township, including the pasture and home woodlot. It had its own brook, mill-privilege, mill and pond, its maple orchard, hickory-nut grove and cranberry ditches, its hills and meadows. Strawberries and mushrooms in the meadows, blueberries in the pasture,

Illustrated by
JEROME ROZEN

ivory plums along the fences;
good steady soil well cleared of
stone, as the walls which inclosed it
testified. There was everything here
which a man could ask for, except health
to enjoy it and a way of earning ready money
to put into its improvement. Luke had both.
He sat back on his heels from his work on a win-
dow frame and surveyed pasture clearing and neigh-
boring fields—proudly, as if he had taken saw and plane
to these as well as to material for the cabin; comfortably, feel-
ing on lifelong friendly family terms with sun, cloud, earth,
stone, tree and water.

Then in spite of his sense of calm completion, perhaps because
of it, he thought again of Jeff, who did not share it. While Luke
worked here where he belonged, where everything was ready to his
hand, Jeff rattled along over hard roads, most likely with his
radiator boiling, perhaps as far as Bangor by now, uncertain where
he would spend the night. Not that he wanted to stay at home,
but that he could not stay if he wanted to. Whatever he wanted,
he had been, in a way, driven out of his own house, the old Sylvest
Gilman place, by one who had no business in it: the stranger who
had slept since November in the west bedroom, under the canopy.

LOOKING off again, Luke's eyes narrowed. The stranger was just
coming along the bank of the brook toward him, books under her
arm and a bundle of papers in her hand. He would have gone back
to his hammering, but she would not let him. She had caught
his eye, and came on swiftly.

"Hello, Luke."

"Hullo."

He had never seen her out in the woods before. She looked
smaller and darker than ever, the outline of her face sharp against
the bare gray branches and pale blue sky. . . . Luke remembered
the first night Jeff brought her home to supper, only a week or
two after the opening of school. Jeff had been transfigured. He
seemed to fill the kitchen, to occupy every chair but hers at the
table. Grammm, Mary, Luke and Bob were no more to be reck-
oned with than shadows. They only watched. This was Margery
Lee, the new teacher at the district school, a girl from up in Ver-
mont somewhere. They knew nothing else about her. She sat
quiet and withdrawn and said very little. Jeff alternated between
striding up and down like a turkey cock, and bending over her,
eager to catch a hint of something he might say or do to please
her. Within a month she had left the drafty "finished chamber"
at the Stacy's and come down to board with Mary.

She never left the Gilman place, except to go to school, even over
week-ends; but she was not in love with Jeff. She often sat
through supper without speaking, and tried to escape as soon
as the meal was over, to her own room. She did not eat
much, but seemed glad of the comfort of her open fire,
and would sit beside it reading, sewing or marking
papers until long after everyone else had gone to
bed. Luke and Jeff could see the reflection of
her lamp on the maples, and hear her stir-
ring as they lay together in the room
above. Luke knew Jeff never slept un-
til the light was extinguished and
she was quiet. . . . Jeff had
not given her up until last
night. He had tried being
patient, and she ignored

him. He had assumed easy, noisy comradeship
with her, and she repulsed him so shortly and
with such a cutting glance, before them all, that
Mary turned her back to hide her flush and seem as if
she had not seen or heard. It was a new way for a girl
with Jeff. He was the handsome one of the four boys, the
one who looked most like his father: hot-headed, no fear in
him, as capable of black hate as of devotion. Any girl Mary knew
had always coveted him; she did not know what would happen to
one who threw back in his face what he had to offer.

Nothing happened. He kept on asking her if she would go
into the village to a moving-picture with him, if she would take
a ride or a walk with him, if she would stay out with the family to
do her sewing. She never would. He brought her magazines and
candy, and they remained in the kitchen after she had gone. He
urged more food on her at the table, and she took the dishes from
him without raising her eyes and set them down untouched, as if
it were more agreeable to her than speaking to him.

"Jeff, I don't believe but what I'd better tell Miss Lee to look
for another place to board as soon as it gets warmer," Mary said
in pity. "I'd like to clean up that west room and have it straight—"

"Why can't you leave her alone?" Jeff growled. "Is she so
much trouble to you, just sitting in there?"

THEN last night when Luke and Bob had followed Mary into
Grammm's room as soon as they left the table, to hear her read
a letter from Harrison, Jeff caught Margery by the shoulders and
held her while he spoke to her. Luke, trying not to look, had
been aware of them through the half-open door.

"I think now we shall be married some time next week," read
Mary. "Inez has all her course work finished for her master's
degree, and her thesis done. She takes her exams Monday and
Tuesday, and if she gets through them all right, as I am sure she
will, we shall be married the last of the week, and sail Sunday
on the *De Grasse*. . . . The firm has never let a new man take
vacation until he had been at least a year in the office, but they
will make an exception in my case. I am taking care of a little
business for them over there. . . . We should reach Southampton
the fifteenth. I shall write. There may not be time for letters,
but you will get cards. Inez sends her love."

When they came out again into the kitchen, Jeff stood alone by
the stove, staring down at the covers. His fists thrust out his
trouser pockets. Luke knew he had clenched them and driven
them down in to keep them out of trouble. He turned when
he heard the others.

"Bob, how soon can you get my car fit to put on the
road?"

"A day or two, I guess. Just a matter of put-
ting it together. Why?"

"Because it's starting down East tomor-
row morning. Early."

"Tomorrow morning? Oh, no, it
isn't."

"Oh, yes, it is. I'll be out of
here before six o'clock."

"Not in that car."

"In that car."

The two eyed each

other. They had al-
ways struck fire.

(Please turn
to page
106)



EXACTLY THE

by LUCIAN CARY

Illustrated by CHARLES D. MITCHELL

TOM STARBUCK sat in the back row of the lecture-room the morning before the Illinois game and listened some of the time to the bright young professor who was giving the course in philosophy, and stared all of the time at Jane Torrance, and knew that there were three bright hours every week that football season.

He was captain of the team. He was playing his last year at left end. The team was good. It was the best team Mike Roley had ever had at Midatarka. Mike had had Dick Holland last year and the year before that. But it was only this year that he had succeeded in using Dick Holland's spectacular ability to carry the ball in a broken field.

The sports-writers said that Dick Holland was now one of the finest halfbacks of all time. The sports-writers seemed to think that Dick had suddenly found himself. They seemed to think he had suddenly moved up from good to great.

Tom Starbuck knew that Dick had been a great half for three years. But Mike Roley hadn't had the material to give a great half his chance until this season. Now he had. Now he had the line; and the fast, expert interference; and Ole Oledon at quarterback.

Dick Holland had made seven long runs to touchdowns in four games. There were only two games left—the one with Illinois at Champaign tomorrow, and the one at home against State the following Saturday. If you wanted to bet in Chicago or New York that Midatarka would finish the season undefeated and take the Midwestern championship for the first time in eighteen years, you had to give even money.

The nearer it got, the worse it got. The nearer it got, the harder it was for Tom Starbuck to sleep nights as a football player should. The bright hours—the hours when Tom Starbuck hardly thought of what it would be like to let a State runner go around his end, or to fail to pull Dick Holland through his history quiz—were on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from eleven to twelve. The bright hours were the hours when he could sit in the back row of the philosophy lecture-room staring at Jane Torrance.

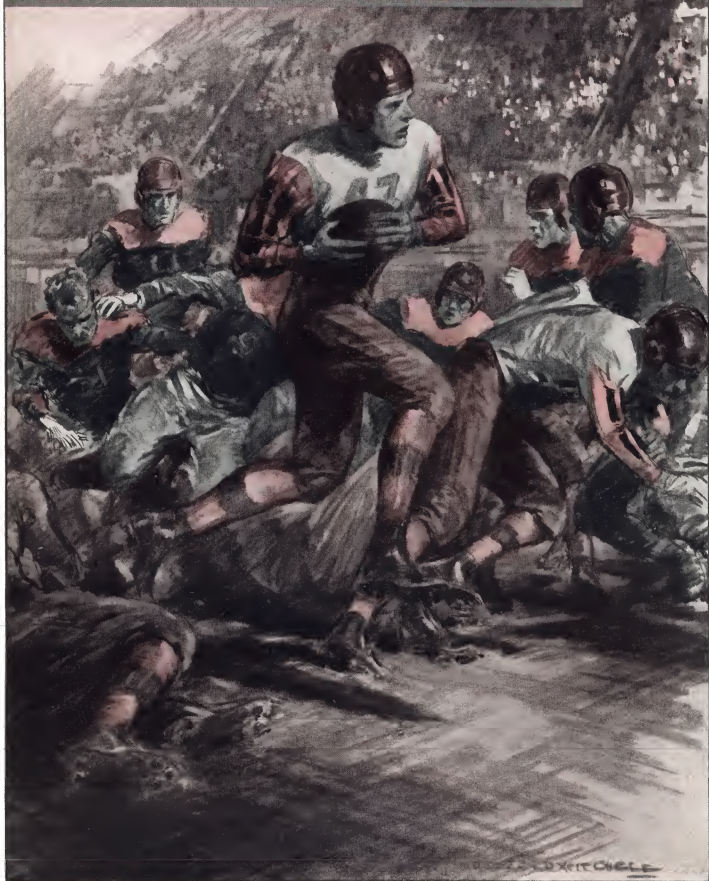
Tom had been in love with her almost since he'd met her, the year before. He had been in love with her for nearly a year now—and she was Dick Holland's girl.

The young professor was out to defy the nature of things. He was out to interest a hundred and twenty-three listeners in philosophy when they were already interested in a winning football team. He was out even to interest the captain of the football team, who was already hopelessly interested in the girl

REDBOOK'S
Novelette
OF THE MONTH



RIGHT GIRL



who sat three seats to the left and three seats below him. And for a moment the professor succeeded, though at great sacrifice to philosophy.

"Dull people," he said, "have got to be good."

TOM STARBUCK heard him. Tom heard him and applied the words to himself. He was, he supposed, rather dull; rather pedestrian. He had always felt the necessity to be good. Sometimes being good meant blocking the opposing tackle with a certain severity. But lately being good meant never so much as hinting to Jane Torrance that he was in love with her. He wondered now whether his conviction that he wouldn't get anywhere making love to Jane Torrance was responsible for his conduct, rather than his virtue. But he told himself that even if he could, he wouldn't.

Dick Holland was the sort who could do, who had always done, exactly as he pleased—except with Mike Roley. Dick Holland got away with anything he chose to get away with, and he chose to get away with a lot. He was handsome. He was the most famous football player in the United States at the moment. But it was more than that: He had, along with the power and speed and toughness of a great halfback, that wistful charm which makes all women from sixteen to sixty want to mother a man.

It was, Tom thought, only natural that Dick didn't know what fidelity was. What could you expect? Just the same, he hoped that Jane Torrance would never know that Dick was playing around with Bonnie Branleigh, who did a trick on the telephone switchboard at the Hotel Granditon. He hoped that Dick would forget about Bonnie before Jane heard of her.

"It will do no good," the bright young professor was saying, "to point out to you that most human beings are dull all the time, and all human beings are dull most of the time. There is, I feel confident, not more than one in the hundred-odd of you present bright enough to think of himself or herself as dull except in moments of acute depression such as follows a binge. I find it hard to think of myself as dull, even when confronted with the irrefragable evidence that several of you, while pretending to listen to me, are actually reading the *Daily Campus*."

"You are, I trust, interested in the outraged tones with which the *Daily* discusses professional gambling on football-games. But though the *Campus* may rave and you may read its ravings, none of you will lift a hand to stop the racketeers from Chicago and other cities who are eventually going to ruin college football as surely as they have ruined prize-fighting. The human animal seems to enjoy being outraged."

But Tom Starbuck had ceased to listen. Tom Starbuck sat gazing at the curve of Jane's cheek and thinking that she had a proper gravity. She was not one of those girls who turn on vivacity when they wake up in the morning and turn it off only when they go to sleep. Her charm went deeper. Jane smiled less often than other girls; but when she smiled at you, your heart beat faster. She made you feel that when she gave her love, she would give it more whole-heartedly than any other girl. She had given it to Dick Holland. She mustn't know that at the moment Dick was spending all the time he could with Bonnie Branleigh.

Tom Starbuck saw the bright young professor bow sardonically to his students, and got up. He knew how to move toward the door so that he would reach the hall at the same moment Jane Torrance did. They managed always to chat a moment about Dick. They were both engaged in protecting Dick from failing in quizzes and being declared ineligible to play. Tom Starbuck had been protecting Dick in other ways for years—in prep-school and college. Tom had become an adroit and resourceful maker of alibis for Dick.

Tom had three times talked the headmaster out of firing Dick when they

were in school; he had talked the head of the French department at Midatarka, who thought that football was the pastime of barbarians, into giving Dick an extra examination, and then had sat up all night coaching him so he could pass it; he had talked policemen out of arresting Dick, for everything from parking in front of a fire-hydrant to giving the cop a black eye. And he had talked endlessly to girls who suspected that they were on their way out of Dick's life and called up to find out where he was. Some of them had got nearer than the telephone. Some of them had cried on Tom's shoulder. Sometimes it was funny, and twice it had been heart-rending. Mostly they were young and silly and needed only to assuage their vanity. Mostly they got over Dick when they found they had to, and got themselves another man, and made him miserable by way of revenge.

Tom Starbuck's arm touched Jane's arm as they went outdoors. Without a word they found a sunny corner, protected from the November wind. They had been doing this a long time now. They didn't have to arrange it.

"Dick called me up last night," she said. "He told me that you told him not to worry about the quiz in History four."

"I didn't make it quite that strong," Tom said.

JANE looked up at him. Jane smiled at him. For an instant he looked into her eyes. Jane's eyes were wide apart, and clear, and deep.

"I know," she said. "You told him you could get him ready for it in six or eight more hours."

They understood each other perfectly. They were like the too doting parents of a spoiled child—a child whose weaknesses they knew and admitted and loved him the more for. Now they were silent, as if neither of them had any more to say. Tom had plenty more to say, but he would never say it. And now he saw that she had something more to say, something she hesitated to say. He



"WE'LL SEND SOMEBODY TO GET YOU," BONNIE CRIED, AND GAVE THE

wondered if she could possibly have heard about Bonnie Branleigh.

"Tom," she said, "Tom—do you—do you think there's anything behind the *Campus*' editorial this morning?"

He looked at her in astonishment. He couldn't imagine her worrying about the Chicago gambling syndicate that ran pools on football games in certain cigar-stores and barber-shops. She never worried about anything except Dick. And if she chose to concern herself about gambling on football-games, why did she hesitate to say so?

"Why do you take it so seriously?" he asked.

"Because of Dick," she said.

"Good Lord!" Tom said. "You don't think they'd try to kidnap him, do you?"

"No," Jane said. "But—I'm scared."

"I thought you had a lot of sense," Tom said.

"I have quite a lot," Jane said.

"Then use it," Tom said.

She looked at him gravely. "Tom," she said, "I've got to talk to somebody. And it will have to be you, because there isn't anybody else."

He waited for her to go on. She turned away her head. She looked out across the campus. He saw again the lovely curve of her cheek in profile.

"You won't have time today," she continued. "You'll go to lunch now, and this afternoon you'll have light practice and take the train for Champaign. How about Sunday? Would you take me somewhere Sunday, Tom?"

"What about Dick?"

"Dick is going to be busy Sunday," Jane said. "His father and mother are coming up from Chicago. You know that."

Tom didn't know that. He was sure it wasn't true. He was sure Dick had told her that, so he could spend most of Sunday with Bonnie Branleigh.

But—

"Yes, of course," he said. "I'll take you anywhere you like on Sunday."

"It's a date, then," she said. "You'll call for me at the Gamma Gamma house right after lunch on Sunday."

"It's a date," Tom said.

She turned to go, and paused.

"Tell Dick I hope he gets the breaks tomorrow. Tell him I hope he gets away for long runs—lots of long runs."

"I'll tell him," Tom said. He said it grimly, without meaning to.

He watched her going down the hill toward the Gamma Gamma house. He watched her going down the hill, and knew that the fact Dick was playing around with Bonnie Branleigh didn't mean that he was free to try to take Jane away from Dick. It only meant he had to guard her from being hurt. He'd have to lie for Dick because he didn't want her hurt.

Tom Starbuck got his roadster from the parking space behind the lecture-hall and drove slowly down toward the capitol square. He had half an hour to think before he went to lunch. It wasn't often you had half an hour to think during football season.

HE nodded sometimes to a man or a girl he knew. But it didn't matter if he forgot to nod. If there was one thing that Mike Roley demanded of Midatarka students, it was that well-wishers let the members of his team alone. Mike Roley liked his men to live as near a normal life as they could during the season. He never took them to a country club the night before a home game the way most coaches did. They slept as usual in the beds they were used to, and reported at the gymnasium at twelve o'clock of a Saturday for signal drill and lunch, and an hour's rest before dressing and going on the field. But he wouldn't have them bothered, and he had almost succeeded in teaching Midatarka not to bother them. And he wouldn't have them any more restricted than they had to be. Not that Mike Roley was easy-going; he punished his men for any infraction of his rules more severely than other coaches dared to do. He had one punishment; he kept a man who had disobeyed orders on the bench. He wouldn't let the man play.

Tom almost ran over Red Brown of the Chicago *Telegram*. Red Brown stopped in front of Tom's car to make him stop. Red Brown got in beside Tom.

"What are you doing here?" Tom asked as he drove on. "You know that Roley won't let you in to practice this afternoon, and the game tomorrow is in Champaign."

"That's what they say," Red Brown said.

Tom drove a mile or so out along the lake shore.

"It's time for me to turn around and go back to lunch," he said.

"You've got fifteen minutes," Red Brown said. "You can drive on a ways. I've got something to ask you."

Tom drove on. Red Brown lit a cigarette. He seemed in no hurry to begin. Tom saw Dick Holland's roadster standing in a dead-end road that led to the lake shore. He looked out of the corner of his eye without moving his head. The top of the roadster was down. He saw a blonde head beside Dick's head, and knew that Bonnie Branleigh was with Dick.

"What do you think of our chances if we played Minnesota?" Tom asked. He hoped Red Brown hadn't seen what he had seen.

"I'm thinking about something else right now," Red Brown said.

"I'm asking myself what Tony di Silvento's crowd are up to."

"They're up to trimming suckers, the same as usual. They run their pool on football-games so they can't help but win."

"They're never satisfied," Red Brown said. "They aren't content with sixty per cent of the take. They want it all."

Tom turned the corner and started back by another way. He didn't want to run into Dick and Bonnie, when he had Red Brown with him.

(Please turn to page 88)



MOTOR THE GAS. DICK WOULD MAKE IT, AND HE'D SEND A CAR BACK.



MY WIFE SAID: "I DON'T
NEED MY CRUISE DIRECTED."

I DON'T think we ever really decided to go on the cruise. No, decision was hardly the proper word for it. We simply found ourselves, quite suddenly and with a trifle of genuine astonishment, looking at our packed bags and ordering a taxiab to take us to the pier.

Perhaps I had better explain how it happened. You see, with a great many people, this itch to travel is something more than a habit. It is a subtle sort of malady, which affects some humans as the inhalation of flower-pollens or the sudden and violent craving for a shot of rye affects other humans. My evidence upon the subject is clinical rather than theoretical, because I happen to be, myself, afflicted. I can be sitting in my home, thoroughly contented, with pleasant and perhaps even important plans for tomorrow, and next week, and next month, when suddenly I am seized with an overpowering restlessness, an overpowering need to move among strangers, hear alien languages spoken, smell the heady flavor of docks and ships and the open sea.

These onslaughts are not occasioned by

Getting Away

outside stimuli. I can read anything, from the gaudy folders of the shipping people to the romantic travel pieces of Lafcadio Hearn, without suffering a qualm. The whole thing comes from the inside, and invariably, when I sense an attack coming on, my intelligence begins to set up its defenses. Memories of the bleak discomforts of far places swim before my thoughts like the shadows on a motion-picture screen. I toss my aching body once again in the bunk of a Trans-Siberian railroad train; I quarrel vehemently with impudent minions of the German Overlord; I struggle with Italian innkeepers who would trick me out of my last lire; I experience, in recollection, all the wild and cunning blows which the ocean can administer when it is in a vile mood.

And in the midst of all that, I am getting down the atlas. I am scanning the arrivals and departures in the ship-news columns of the papers. I am remembering what this friend, or that, reported on the delights or the miseries of the ports which lie on the fringes of the sea.

Now, this last attack occurred at a particularly inopportune moment. I was busy. My bank-account was in a shabby state indeed. My wife had occupations which made a prolonged absence from home seem utterly impossible. She really did not want to go anywhere at all.

We argued in a desultory fashion for a few days until, one evening, she said in her mild fashion: "How about a cruise? The Millers went on a cruise, and they said they liked it."

She intended that observation as a lightly barbed thrust. She had heard me, time without end, mutter peevishly about cruises: the lack of imagination which sends somebody off on them, the lack of a

sensible destination. She knew what I thought of anything that the Millers found delightful. But I was in a perverse mood myself, and so I said: "That's an idea! How about a cruise?"

Neither of us, you will observe, really thought seriously about the thing at first. We did not think seriously about it as we bent over the glass-topped counter in the shipping company's office. I don't believe we thought seriously about it even when we were going up the gangplank that savage evening, with icicles hanging from the edge of the gangplank, and an edged wind whimpering down the Hudson. The whole enterprise seemed to creep upon us unawares.

THE next morning we thought seriously about it, I can tell you that. We were coming abreast of Hatteras, and the sea was raising hell. We were cold, without appetite for food, and suddenly we were very lonely.

In the smoking-room of the big ship a hundred men and women were sitting around, staring gloomily into their whisky glasses. Rain tore at the huge glass windows, which rattled in the storm. The stewards looked at us with bleary eyes and demanded to know what we might want.

We were experienced travelers. We knew perfectly well that the first sight of one's fellow-voyagers, on any ship or any track at all, is painfully discouraging. We knew that one always says: "Good heavens, why did all these horrible people decide to go on my ship? Why aren't there some interesting-looking people? Oh, if only I had stayed snug at home!"

As I say, this sort of thing happens the first day out on any ocean voyage. You are looking over human beings who must share your dining-room, and your deck,

America's First Reporter gives a shrewd account of what you can expect, what you can't expect and what's sure to come true during a cruise in the West Indies.



THAT SHIP WAS A YACHT, CHARTERED
BY A MULTIPLICITY OF SMALL GROUPS.

From It All!

your swimming-pool, your dances and your moments of relaxation in the sunshine—and almost any human being seen for the first time under such circumstances is likely to appear altogether unattractive. It is simply a protective instinct to expect the worst until you are proved wrong. Yet on the ordinary trip you can always say: "Oh, well—what does it matter? We will be there soon, anyway, and we'll never have to see any of these people again after we land."

Here it was different. We were not going anywhere. When we escaped these fellow-travelers, the whole voyage, the whole adventure, would be over. So I said, as bitterly as possible: "A fine idea of yours, this one! Eighteen days of this. Wonderful, isn't it?"

My wife said: "You were the one who did it. I wanted to stay comfortably at home all the time." Then she tried to smile. "Let's pretend that all the swell people are still below—unpacking, or seasick, or something."

The longer we sat there in the smoking-room, the more grisly the outlook became, and so finally we wandered down to our cabin to begin unpacking. All along the way I grumbled; and once, halfway down a long corridor, I said sharply: "Why in the devil did I ever let myself in for anything like this?"

Instantly a face popped from behind a cabin-door curtain: the harassed, angry-mouse face of a small, youngish woman. She peered at me. "Thank God," she said, "somebody else feels that way about it. Is there any place we can get off and go back?"

That, I believe, was the turning-point. Half of my unhappiness had been a sort of amused self-mockery, anyway. I was

not nearly so miserable as I had pretended to be. And at this moment something in the profound and childish wretchedness of the poor woman's face and voice seemed hilariously funny. I said, as quickly as possible: "Oh, you quite misunderstood. I wasn't talking about the trip. The trip is wonderful. I was just remarking on some trifling matter."

WHEN we got to our cabin, we sat down on the beds and laughed—at ourselves and at the world—at people deliberately getting themselves into miserable situations. In just a moment or two we were altogether cheerful again, for even in the dim and storm-wracked light which came through the porthole, the cabin was a place of comfort and gay color. The labels on our bags looked bright and adventuresome. The wardrobes were ample, and fresh sea air was pouring in through the punkah-louvers.

As we sat screwing up our energies to begin unpacking, the steward came in. Now Brual, told off to be our factotum for nearly three weeks, nodded cheerily, asked for our tickets, observed that tomorrow the weather would be handsome and the sea tranquil, and made himself busy opening bags, getting down coat-hooks, talking in a ceaseless stream.

We were going to call at six Caribbean ports on our cruise. Neither of us had seen any of the ports before, and we were naturally eager to look at them. But we would not reach the first until five days of sailing had gone by—Martinique, that would be, at the tail end of the Leeward Islands—and so we had plenty of time to shake down, find our sea legs, and search charily among the ship's company for one or two whose society we might want.



NIGHTS, WE HAD GOOD MUSIC AND MODERATE FUN.

Both of us were well aware of the first, ineluctable rule of traveling on the sea: Be stand-offish with everybody for the first day or two, or you are certain to have the ship's bore permanently on your hands; pick your future friends with extreme care; let the queer class-system of the ship establish itself before moving into any group at all. That evening at cocktail-time we watched the novices, the apprentice-voyagers, plunge in where older hands would fear to tread.

The smoking-room was rather full by the time we went up. The seas had calmed a good deal; the wind had a touch of southern balm already on its wing. In their freshly unpacked evening gowns the women looked vastly more attractive than they had earlier in the day, and the black-coated stags already were on the hunt. There were flowers about. The glasses on the tables were an invitation. We ordered Martinis and sat back to observe.

The first minuscule drama of the voyage began its play almost immediately. There were two men at a table: Williken and Billiken, we called them then, and never



Photos by F. S. Lincoln

by
**MORRIS
MARKEY**

MISGIVINGS VANISHED. THE SUN WAS BRILLIANT; WE HAD ACQUIRED FRIENDS.

found a better name for them. A tall blonde woman, thirtyish, nursed a champagne cocktail hard by. Williken smiled at her, invited her to join him and his friend; she came over readily enough, and within two minutes all three were laughing merrily.

When we all went down to the dining-room, at about eight o'clock, Williken and Billiken and their blonde moved immediately to the table where the chief steward was making out the table assignments. All three of them, we gathered, had already won tables. But now they wanted a change. They wanted to be together, and they were put together, not very far from us.

Similar little parties were forming up all about the dining-room—a great potter of table-changing, a great and hilarious sealing of instantly formed friendships. We sat in our smug seclusion, saying over and over again: "Eighteen days, eighteen days, eighteen days is a mighty long time."

That night, in the smoking-room after dinner, we ourselves acquired a friend. He came toward our remote table, a plump, short man about thirty-five, with yellow hair parted in the middle, horn-rimmed spectacles, and an instantly engaging smile. He apologized for the intrusion; said he had noted our names among the passengers, said that he knew an old acquaintance of ours very intimately, and introduced himself as Mark Northern.

He had a romantic story of his presence on the ship. He had come aboard late in the afternoon of sailing-day to have a cocktail with an official of the line; he had become entranced with the ship and the prospect of making the cruise. He had telephoned to his rooms for clothing and to his bank for money, had gone to sleep until sailing-time, and now was one of the jolly crowd aboard. Also, it appeared almost at once, he had not been a sluggard during the few hours which separated us from New York. People began to speak to him as if they were old friends. Men and women alike waved at him from a dozen tables whenever he turned his head. Both of us liked him, instinctively; but we refused point-blank and a little rudely, I suppose, when he urged us to leave our small table and go with him to a larger one. "I can make you acquainted with everybody on the ship," he said.

We told him we had no desire to be acquainted with everybody on the ship.

"But you've got to meet the cruise-director, and right away too," he said. "He's a swell fellow. There won't be a dull moment once he settles down to work."

Now, of all the latent dreads which we had nurtured, the blackest was the thought of the cruise-director. People had told us about cruise-directors on other ships: They got everybody organized. Everybody was on a committee. Everybody took part in the group games and the tournaments. You couldn't have a dull moment.

My wife had said from the outset: "If the cruise-director bothers me, I'm going to be rude to him. I don't need my cruise directed." She had got from the hotel a handful of those "Do Not Disturb" signs, and sworn that she would wear one on her shoulder all through the trip if anybody tried to make her play deck-tennis or ping-pong or shuffle-board, or if anybody tried to make her dress up like a clown at the masquerade. "If I can't amuse myself," she had said, "certainly I can't be driven into gaiety by a professional fun-organizer."

Certain of these sentiments she now vouchsafed for the ears of Mr. Northern. He understood, he said. On the other hand, we

certainly would like to know the Captain—and a meeting with the Captain could be fixed up. He would arrange everything.

At that moment two of Mr. Northern's new acquaintances brought chairs to our little table and sat down. The man said: "Little Margie, here, would like to hear how you got on the cruise. I told her it was a swell story and you were a swell guy."

So Mr. Northern told how he had come aboard—but he did not tell the same story he had told us. Oh, no. This time the story was more romantic still. He had come aboard with a couple

of friends, to see them off. Frankishly, they had locked him in the ship's brig. When he awakened from some sleeping potion they had given him, the ship was well out at sea, and now here he was, determined to have a good time despite what his boss might have to say eighteen days hence.

I might advise you, now, that Mr. Northern was one of the most naïve and accomplished fabricators I ever met. It was wonderful. It was also completely innocent, completely natural, and finally amusing. It would be wrong to say that he was a liar. That word suggests a sinister and harmful quality which he did not possess in the least degree. He simply had a necessity to top every story he heard. Was Moscow mentioned? Good, he had spent two years in Moscow—grand town. Had he crossed the ocean many times? Many! Eighty-seven, that was all.

And you knew that there wasn't the least truth in anything he said.

Four days out, and all our misgivings were vanished. The sun was a brilliant fire over emerald seas. The swimming-pool on deck was opened up. The deck buffet had been instituted—the noblest luncheon idea ever planned, with long tables crowded with platters of the most appetizing things, and deck-boys to carry your trays to tables beneath gaudy umbrellas on the Lido deck. Most important of all, we had acquired friends.

It was really very simple.

The purser had six people—three couples—for cocktails in his quarters, with Mr. Northern for good measure; and those other two couples were people we liked at once. One of the men knew another passenger who was a good companion. One of the women knew a French couple who were amusing. Our small company drifted together as easily as that—all of us having had the good sense to wait. And from that day on we were together all the time.

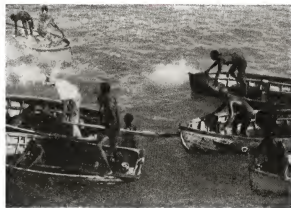
In case you have never been on one of these cruises—or traveled much upon the ocean—I would like to remark upon a rather curious phenomenon. There were perhaps more than three hundred passengers on the ship. It was impossible to escape from the microcosm of those three hundred. They were all the world there was. And yet, once we had formed up our little company of ten or twelve, the rest of the people on

the ship were as remote as if they had lived in Cairo, Illinois. They did not impinge upon our lives in the smallest degree.

We saw them constantly, of course, nodded to them, returned their grins, spoke pleasantly if there was anything to speak about. But there was neither necessity nor, indeed, opportunity to make friendships or animosities among them. Now, please do not think I am being snobbish. The other people, the other small groups or companies of instinctive friends, felt precisely the same way about us. They simply did not know, nor care, that we were alive. Their lives did not focus upon us, or upon another group except their own. To all intents and purposes, that ship was a private yacht, chartered by a multiplicity of small groups which flowed in-



NATIVES SELLING FRUIT.... "THE DAYS
BEGAN TO DRAW OUT IN LASSITUDE."



NATIVES DIVING FOR COINS.... "DISTANT
BEACHES AND CHATTERING STRANGE TONGUES."

stinctively to each other, and in the eyes of each group there were a number of other shadowy people about—people who came and went about their affairs without even the reality of names.

One of our crowd, a fellow from Albany, N. Y., who never said a foolish thing for the whole duration of the voyage, put the whole business clearer than I have managed in two long paragraphs. He said, one night when the smoking-room was crowded and when our neighbors at the next table were as remote and impersonal as fellow-passengers in a subway train: "Every now and then somebody comes out with the old remark: Divide the wealth of the country absolutely equally among all the citizens, and in five years it will be right back in the hands of the rich class again. That's the platitude. . . . Well, look around you. The three hundred on this ship have gravitated to their own kind, within four days, as surely as if they had been chemicals, acted upon by a reagent. The playboys are all together. The rich people—see them, all in one corner by themselves, and enjoying themselves according to their lights. The lonely ones—even the lonely ones are all together, and the dummies, and serious sightseers and bridge-players and—I was going to say drunks—"

One of us interrupted to remark, with more than a little of astonishment, that there were no drunks on board at all. Five years ago that would have been an impossible thing to observe in any ship's company made up of Americans. Always there would have been four or five or maybe a dozen, determined to drink the bar dry. Now, since repeal, it is not so. For the whole eighteen days I never saw a drunk. Well, one—but it was not bad. . . .

We were down among the Leeward Islands.

The little Sombrero Isle, with its tall radio station, was the first one we sighted. Perhaps we would not have known that it was coming up on the horizon had the cruise-director not announced the fact over the ship's loud-speaker. Anyway, that glimpse of land, which is always such an utterly fascinating sight to one at sea, was a warm and moving experience. She lay there like a pancake on the water, a pancake with a toothpick stuck in its middle. Through the glasses we could see a man waving—and I cannot say with my meager words what a nostalgia that gave us: a wishing that we could be he, a terror of his loneliness there, a wishing that we could stop, and hear him talk. Nothing, gentlemen, is so stirring and sweet-painful a thing as to pass an island in the sea, to watch its contours, and go on by, and wish that you could be there for a while.

Thereafter we pulled under the high, dead cone of Saba; we brushed the surf at St. Kitts; we saw, far upon the horizon, Antigua, and Montserrat and Guadeloupe.

And as we slipped past those islands of the lovely names, plowing the coral seas, with the flying fishes throbbing in terror away from our cutwater, all life shook down into a pattern that was routine, yet still a heady routine. It was a luscious thing to get up whenever we wanted to get up—to prowling the decks, and avoid as if it were the plague any sort of organized doings—to eat fine food and drink glorious wine—to chat with our friends in all that superb intimacy which, for all you say, is not the distillate of old acquaintance, but of new acquaintance (for, you see, all our stories were new among our company, and all opinions laced with the enthusiasm of first hearing. Talk can never be stale and repetitious when fresh friends are at your side)—to dance in the

moonlight, and look forward eagerly to the strange places we were to see, and pour our acid upon the others, our fellow-passengers.

For, again, it is great sport to make fun of people. They might be the grandest people in the world, but you do not know them, really, and it is fun to mock their little failings (as they, no doubt, are mocking ours). We named a lone and moody man Crime and Punishment—C.P. for short—because he looked like the harassed protagonist of Dostoevsky's novel. We took a childish pleasure in seeing Williken and Billiken grow weary of their blonde. We watched, with all the pleasure of a shrew seeing a village romance grow sour, their tortuous technique of escaping her. We admired the pretty girls, and there was a plenty of them aboard—scorned their swains, worried over the temptations which faced them, discussed asking them to join us, had our wives veto the notion as quickly as it was broached—boasted manfully of our prowess (if only we were not hampered by matrimony).

Nights, now and again, we were entertained by a troupe of some dozen dancers and singers. They were professionals: nothing extraordinary as professionals, but still a tall cut above amateur show-making. All nights we had good music by an American band, sensible drinking, moderate fun without a cut-up in the whole latitude. The days began to draw out in all the lassitude of the tropics and of idling people out to refresh themselves according to their own philosophies. The nights grew soft and mellow.

I do not propose to write you a prospectus of the Caribbean ports. We went to St. Pierre, in Martinique, getting up dutifully at six o'clock in the morning to see the approach to Mont Pelée—that muttering hill which, one sunny day in 1902, burst into a roar and killed twenty-eight thousand people in five minutes. We saw, also in Martinique, the hot square and the narrow streets of Fort-de-France, drinking rum there, and having fantastic headgear tied by noble-faced black women upon the heads of our own females. We went to Trinidad, and wound in a tender for many a mile across that shallow bay to see how the British run a colony.

I would really like to write about Trinidad, for it is a very beautiful corner of the world, and I shall be a long while forgetting the black-faced minstrels who swarmed about our tender singing their songs in such a Bond Street English: "Mama no like no peas no rice," and "Down the Mountain," and "Underneath that Moon."

As a matter of fact, that was our cruise-director's closest brush with death—that trip across the bay at Trinidad. You understand, nobody really disliked the cruise-director. On the other hand, nobody really liked him. He kept to himself most of the time. When he did not keep to himself, he

bothered people just a little. Of course you know what a cruise-director is: a fellow whose main job it is to see that everybody meets everybody else, and to kid into amiability anybody who seems to be having a horrible time. Our ship hired an Irishman for the job and then the people in charge must have told him to do nothing about the job after all. For they have a bitter dislike for being organized. They wish to enjoy themselves in their own way, as silly as that way might appear to everybody else on earth. As a consequence, our Irish cruise-director (do not be angry, Fenians, for I am one of you and so can talk) was superb when he followed orders, and terrible when he was moved to pursue the instincts of his trade.



'ONE NIGHT IN HAVANA.... HOW INSANE IT WOULD BE TO GO INTO THAT!'



"WE SAW ALSO, IN MARTINIQUE, FORT-DE-FRANCE—DRINKING RUM THERE."

FREE WOMAN

The Story Thus Far:

THIS is the story of Harriet Lanforth, whose name you know. She is a young woman, to be such a success in life—thirty-one. You know her business, and how big it is, and how diverse it is. *Harriet Lanforth, Incorporated, Counselor to Women.*

Her present husband's name is Crendleton—Edmund B. Crendleton. No one remembers it, but that is what it is. She has one child, a boy, now eight years old, born during her first marriage. She keeps him in a country-house she built especially for him in Connecticut, with an excellent Miss Holliday she brought especially from England.

Harriet comes of a well-to-do Minneapolis family. At seventeen she had rebelled against the woman's college for which she'd been destined, and insisted upon a school of physical culture. She did very well at that, as she did in all things, and became a camp counselor. But now came one of the few occasions when her life did not go according to plan—her plan: For at the camp one girl caused the drowning of another, in a fit of jealousy over their adored Harriet; the newspapers got hold of the story; and she realized at once that her career in this field was ended.

The episode did not upset her too much, however, and it taught her something about women. Soon, moreover, she got a job that taught her more about them—in charge of the exercise department at the big Adrienne Gaylord beauty establishment. . . . She was in her second year there when she married Whitney Bishop—largely because, apparently, she had always planned to marry when she was twenty-one. That was the way she did things—just as once she had experimented in the privacy of her room to find out how much whisky she could safely drink; just as she had once, when she was eighteen, gone to New York for a week-end with a young man. Her husband's name was Whitney Bishop, an architect, who looked something like her father. The marriage, of course, did not interfere with her job. *(The story continues in detail:)*

SHE bore him a son. This figure of speech was never more figurative, however. Harriet bore herself a son, in August, 1928. It was the year appointed—the twenty-fourth year of her life, near the end of the second year of her marriage; and it was the month when business was at its lowest ebb at Adrienne Gaylord's. This consideration had outweighed the fact that January, for example, would have been a cooler month for such a strenuous undertaking. Harriet could not be spared till June, and that was that. She doubted all this talk of strenuousness, anyway.

As it turned out, she worked till July first—then she indignantly discovered that her interesting condition was embarrassing to the salon, and she began a two-months' leave of absence. It irked her from the very



"YOUR SON!" CRIED MRS. BISHOP. "HE'S AS MUCH WHIT-

hour of its inception; she was as restless as a convict for two days in her apartment; and on the afternoon of the third day, her husband, coming home at five, found the front doorway blocked by two deliverymen and one new dictaphone. "I thought I'd write something," said Harriet in explanation.

She wrote twelve articles on beauty, health, diet and exercise, housekeeping, child-raising, the training of servants, the holding of husbands, the cooking and serving of meals, and the necessity for more and better organization. She spoke all morning, every morning, into the dictaphone; in the afternoon she went over the type-written transcription of the previous day's work, and found it good. And very good. She had no special flair for writing, but she now perceived that—as she had suspected—none was needed. She was articulate, and she had had something to say, and she had said it. She would sell it, beyond any doubt at all.

She did, but that was a little later, while she was in the hospital. The sale of all twelve articles, offered together as a series, was

by

KATHARINE
BRUSH

Illustrated by FRANK BENSING

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The brilliant author of "Young Man of Manhattan" is superbly pitiless in this outspoken story about a woman who worshiped money and utilized love.



NEY'S SON AS HE IS YOURS—"NO, HE IS NOT!" SAID HARRIET. "WHITNEY WAS NOT HIS FATHER."

pending on the seventh of August, when her son was born. She had acquired a literary agent, as an adjunct to the dictaphone; and it was during a conference in his office in the morning that she became aware that this was going to be the day. "August seventh," she thought pleasantly, while she talked on and finished talking; "Jon Lanforth Bishop, August seventh, 1928."

There seemed to be no hurry, and she liked being calm about this. She liked knowing that her agent would remember. She left his office leisurely, and took a taxicab to her apartment—where she shut a suitcase that had previously been packed, sent it downstairs, informed her cook that Mr. Bishop would be alone for dinner, and telephoned her obstetrician's office, where she left a message. "Yes, Mrs. Lanforth," the nurse said. "He's at the hospital now. I'll tell him you're on your way."

"Miss Lanforth," Harriet said. "Thank you."

She did not call Whitney, knowing his engagements for the morning, and that they were important—she would call him later, if at

all. It occurred to her that it would be amusing not to call him, not to let him know until afterward that this was happening. It would be another of those things of which her friends were always saying, "My dear, wouldn't you know? Wasn't that just like Harriet!" They would be right, too, she decided, hearing their exclaiming voices even now. It *would* be like her—and that settled it.

As a matter of historical record, the whole subsequent performance was characteristic, even in ways over which Harriet herself had no control. She arrived alone at the hospital, where they hustled her into bed. It appeared that this would not take very long. Harriet smoked cigarettes, and issued commands as she thought of them—one of them was that she was not to be given an anesthetic of any kind. "This is the only baby I shall ever have," she said. "I want to know what it's like, while I'm about it." She was sincere in this; and whether or not she would have changed her mind in the course of hours, remains forever problematical. Her son was born in less than thirty minutes.

She exhibited no elation over the fact that it was a son—she had been confident of this, as if only men were born to women. Here he was: Jon Lanforth Bishop, weeping squeakily. She regarded him with keen attention when they showed him to her, and remarked that she supposed he would look better presently. They wheeled her back to her own room, where she smoked another cigarette, and drank a cup of tea, and took the nap they recommended. They had called Whitney in the meantime, and he was present when she woke.

"My dear," she said to him then, "women are sissies, as I've always said. The *fuss* they make about this thing! The way they dramatize it!"

"It wasn't bad?"

"It was uncomfortable," said Harriet. "I'll go that far with them."

SHE took Jon home when he was ten days old, and turned him over to a trained nurse called Miss Blodgett, to whom he belonged for several years thereafter. They dwelt in the apartment, this new pair, and they were sometimes seen going in and out, in seasonable clothing. Once a day they received Harriet—this was at six-fifteen each evening. It was a little formal, for some reason. Whitney's calls upon his son were more successful, and more numerous. "You'll spoil him," Harriet said from the beginning.

He was a good baby, and reasonably quiet. He was to look like Harriet eventually—precisely like her. At the moment he looked rather like Miss Blodgett, who was pink and vague. They had the room once known as Whitney's study, now the nursery—an airy sanitary room with scrubbed white furniture and plain blue walls—no marching ducks, or busy tots in sunbonnets and pinafores, nor any nonsense of that type. Harriet Lanforth, decorator.

That was a crowded year for her, and a fine year. She worked prodigiously that autumn, to make up for lost time; and on her own momentum she went on that way all winter. The results were various, and profitable. Her salary at Gaylord's was raised for the fourth time—this time to ten thousand a year, which was a first milestone achieved; and in addition she had sold not only twelve but nineteen magazine articles, at prices ranging from one hundred to six hundred dollars each.

This was a joke, she said and thought—at the same time she was unsmilingly determined to demand eight hundred dollars for the next ones, and a thousand later. The facility with which she wrote the things was where the joke came in. She literally ripped them off—she could do one in a short evening. It appeared that the tongue in the cheek was no deterrent to creation. She could still speak fluently into the dictaphone.

There was her stock-market experience, of that year and the next year. Her friends still mutter when they think of it. She put no money in the market until she had some money—then she risked exactly what she felt she could afford to lose. That, and no more. She was no fool, even in those demented days. "Lose" was an almost obsolete word, but she recalled it.

She risked five thousand dollars. The year was 1928, and the month April. She began pyramiding. She enjoyed herself enormously. She was a little tempted to go on and on and on—but she did not. In July, 1929, she said: "There, that's enough." She cashed it in. It had become two hundred thousand.

Her broker did not hesitate to argue with her. He was a friend of hers, by this time. He spoke frantically. "Listen, you're out of your mind!" he said. "Why, listen, we can double that in two more months—" But Harriet was obdurate. She said: "Shut up and sell it." She said: "I've had enough luck, for one run. Why tempt fate, after all?"

This would be known as Harriet's Hunch, forever after. . . .

She divorced Whitney. That was another incident of 1929. She divorced him—casually, as she had married him—that summer, during her long vacation, which she spent in Reno. She took a house there, and engaged a native secretary, and in six weeks she wrote some sixty thousand words for magazines. She also wrote an almost equal number for herself—these with more thought and much more care. She had a plan.

Her reasons for divorcing Whitney were not very clear to him, but this was of no consequence—he had agreed, as one agrees to death and taxes. He was rather sorry, but he was not surprised; and he was not even as sorry as he felt he ought to be. Harriet thought he took it very well indeed, and she was very glad. She hated fuss. In an excess of friendly feeling brought on by his compliance, she permitted it to be decreed that, even though she had the custody of Jon, Whitney could see him once a week, and Jon should visit Whitney for two months out of each year, and furthermore Whitney should have a father's voice in all decisions relative to Jon's upbringing and his education.

This was a mistake—one of her few. She knew that later.

Gross cruelty and desertion were charged by Mrs. Bishop, answering now to that misnomer for the first time and the last; and the divorce went off without a hitch, in seven minutes. She asked no alimony—naturally. She was rabid on that subject. She had exoriated alimony wives in several of her published articles,



SHE SAID: "YOU MEAN YOU'RE REALLY GOING AHEAD WITH THIS THING? YOU'RE GOING TO DRAG ME INTO COURT ABOUT IT? BUT THAT'S INSANE!"

under such telling titles as "The Reno Racketeers," and such sardonic ones as "Happily Ever After."

In effect she now said: "See how I do it, when I divorce a man." She did not even ask assistance in supporting Jon, and would not take a penny of what Whitney wished to give her.

She returned to New York, and to her very own apartment, rejoicing in its emptiness and spaciousness and peace. "Now!" she kept thinking. Now she could work. Now she could live her life. Now any interruption, any diversion, any emotion, any change, any delay, would be because she willed it. All projects would be her projects, and any hours she kept would be her hours, with no one to come knocking on her workroom door at night, saying, "But it's two o'clock! You need your rest!"—when she did not.

Now she would really travel fast, traveling alone. The only wonder was that she had let herself be hindered—bothered, anyway, and bored—these past three years.

Never again. She would be free—forever now; and now the world could watch and see what she could do, and what she would do.

WHITNEY remarried, practically at once. He behaved incredibly, to Harriet's way of thinking. He who had been a confirmed bachelor until three years ago, now scarcely let a decent interval elapse between his wives—and such a second wife as he acquired so expeditiously you really never saw, but never in your life!

"Well, yes, you have," said Harriet to friends, amending this pronouncement, "—now that I think of it. Of course. She's like a younger Mummy."

"Mummy?" her friends inquired.

"That's what Whitney calls his mother," Harriet said, bitterly.

No one misunderstood her, for an instant. There was no faintest jealousy in anything she said about the second Mrs. Bishop—there was simply the annoyance that stupidity in other people always caused in her. She pitied Whitney, who had clearly lost his senses and would suffer for it. Here was this childish blonde, in baby blue. Dottie, her name was. She had little bits of feet, and little fluttering helpless hands, and profuse yellow ringlets, pale and plump, like curls of restaurant butter. She adored Whitney—there was no mistaking that; and that of course explained his aberration. She obviously thought him big and beautiful and wonderful, and very witty when he chose to be, and other things that he was not.

Where he had ever found her in the first place was a mystery—and where he now resided with her was a nightmare, nothing less. It was a penthouse in the cinders over East End Avenue, and it was full of Sealyhams and sofa-pillows and the like. "And you an architect!" Harriet chided Whitney mentally. She almost said it, when she went to call upon them in the modern way. She did say to Dottie, in a warm smooth voice: "What a cozy living-room this is—with all your cunning things about."

She gave a dinner-party for them, in a mood of ostentatious sportsmanship, and in a vein of smart drawing-room comedy. She spent three hundred dollars on her wedding-present to them, which she chose herself, with such exquisite taste as to rebuke their dining-room. She saw them rather often, as time went on. Jon spent his Sundays with his father, according to the letter of the law; and Harriet herself often delivered him and called for him.

Delivering him, she would remain and visit for an hour or more; and when she called for him, she would arrive an hour or more ahead of time. This left only four hours in which he was unsupervised, and of these four hours he slept two—he was supposed to, anyway. Harriet did not trust his stepmother in this or any other matter.

Already she began to see her legal error, all too clearly. This was deplorable—Jon's being every Sunday with that fatuous father, and that cooing little fool of fools.

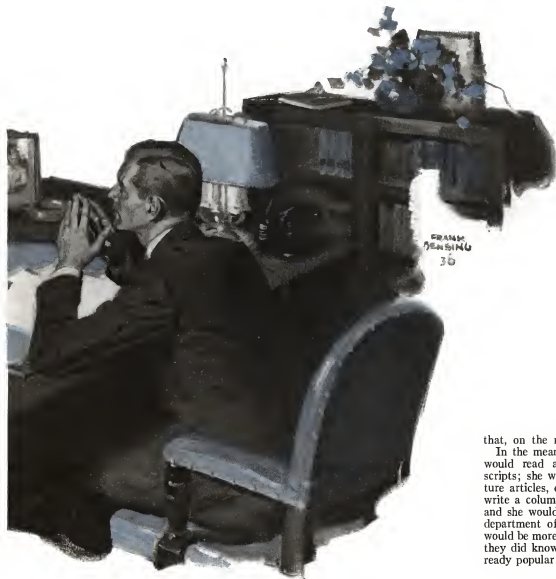
She still believed the error to be irreparable, however; it was only later that necessity gave birth to inspiration; and in any case she was too busy nowadays to worry much about it, or to give it any thought whatever between Sundays.

Her own life was all-absorbing during the week. It was a changed life now—she had revised it even in a business way. She had resigned from Gaylord's in September, after her divorce; the resignation would become effective on the first of January. She was gratified by the inducements offered her to reconsider, but she was not swayed. She had her plan, and money could not buy her.

As the next step, she had accepted a position—self-promoted—on the editorial staff of the biggest and most influential of the several magazines in which her articles had been appearing. This would be temporary. She would stay two years, no more. They did not know

that, on the magazine; but Harriet knew it.

In the meantime, and for the duration, she would read and edit other people's manuscripts; she would continue to contribute feature articles, one every issue; she would also write a column, if she had her way about it; and she would conduct a question-and-answer department of general feminine interest. She would be more than worth her salt. That much they did know, on the magazine. She was already popular with (Please turn to page 65)





"EXTRAORDINARY WOMAN?" SHE REPLIED. "I'D BE AN EXTRAORDINARY CORPSE IF THOSE LIGHTS HADN'T BEEN

MAGNIFICENT

It was something she did to him, something she awakened in him, that made him realize the utter futility of vengeance.

BELOW her, the earth was shrouded, hidden. Above and about her, the night spread flamboyantly; when she looked upward through the closed transparent hatch, the starlight seemed adrift like a silver pollen. The moon was bending toward the west, down behind her shoulder. It was past midnight. By dawn, by sunrise at least, she would raise Shanghai on the Yangtze delta, and drop this tired amphibian to the waters of the Whangpoo.

The Hornet's thunder had been so constant for so many hours, so many days, that now there was an illusion of its sound being far away. Before her, on the large dash, dials glowed. Topmost, a small planelike object, an infinitesimal reproduction, floated above a line that was her artificial horizon. Below it, a needle pointed almost straight downward on a dial of equal size: 155 miles an hour. Below and to the right of that, a bubble hung at the greatest depth of an inverted arc. A level course—altitude, six thousand. Through the high starlit darkness she followed the course laid on her chart.

She was tired. The vibratory impulses of the plane had become a part of her, flowing now, it seemed, with her blood. She was dead tired. For eighteen hours she had sat in this seat, without a respite; and most of China was behind her. Many countries and an ocean and several lesser seas were also behind her—and at sunrise, God willing, there would be another landfall.

She had a strong face, thin and oddly fascinating in its strength, and beautiful and a little sad. It was foolhardy, this flight; but she had played the fool on one other and memorable occasion; and now, this time, she found a certain grim satisfaction in playing the fool again.

It was, the press said, superb courage, heroic. Up here, high in the night, she could laugh quietly and a little mockingly. They would never know. No one would ever know. Not even, she supposed, Prescott. She liked to think that perhaps the Hornet would know, that perhaps it already knew, had known from the beginning. "Do your best, old sport," she would say. "But if you fail, if your old heart breaks, I'll understand; I shan't hold it against you."

You had ample time up here to think. She had sung; she had quoted bits from Byron and Millay and Rupert Brooke. This rare night over China gave her a sense of exaltation, and now she drew back on the stick, pulled the ship up another thousand feet and leveled off and watched a sea of frayed and tattered cloud pass beneath. She slid a window back and let the cold night wind hammer in, and it beat sudden color into her pallid cheeks. After a while she closed the window, arched her aching back, and flexed her wearied legs.

The cough of the motor did not startle her. She was too tired to be startled, and in the back of her head there had been all along the feeling that somewhere, sometime, this might happen. A cough, a violent gasp, and then the true thunder once more; but she noticed with a quick glance that the air-speed needle had moved counter clockwise. And then the cough again, a rattling, choking cough.

Her hand, on the stick, went forward a bit. The image on the topmost dial dropped nearer the straight horizontal line. The altitude-indicator fell away. She pushed left on the stick, depressed with her left foot, and the bubble in the inverted arc moved to the left, her right wing rose hugely to the higher stars. Her lips flattened against her teeth.

Earthward. Through a smoking, swirling cloud. The engine sound gave way to the strident keening of the wind, and she put the ship in a long glide. Only the propeller spun, driven by the wind. The engine picked up again, spitting, hacking, jerking at the ship; but then it died, and she followed the long glide around, dropping past the lower stars, coming into the shadow of the earth.

Banking, she could see tiny pinpoints of light below. A town, perhaps—a small, wilderness town. She kept her eyes on the lights, hoping she would crash beyond, yet near enough so that she would be found. It didn't matter, of course—not really; but she somehow wanted to be found. How the engine tried, tried to pick up, rasping awake, coughing, and then dying again! Those people below would hear it. The lights grew larger, and the lowest stars were now obscured by the looming shadow of the earth. Her lips were tight, but with a little grimace, and a tear rolled down her cheek.

SHE turned off the ignition and looked upward, and saw how beautiful the night was; then she looked downward and saw that suddenly a uniform pattern of lights had come to life on the earth's dark face. Her throat closed, opened with a little gasp. No beacon, no floodlight, but four rows of lights that made a significant rectangle. By her chart, she knew, she was at least two hundred miles from a field. But this below, by all signs, was a field, chart or no chart!

Blood flowed hotly through her again. She snapped on the landing-lights, and her eyes widened, strained. Beneath her, soon, she



TURNED ON AT THE FIELD."

GESTURE

by FREDERICK
NEBEL



Illustrated by
ANDREW LOOMIS

saw dimly low shacks whipping past, and liquid glints that looked like dark water illumined briefly by her lights. She was very low. She crossed a line of lights, and set her ship down on the uncertain ground. The ship bounced, slammed down again, threw her sidewise; but she brought its tail down and went rumbling and jolting past small running figures. And then the ship stopped, with its nose almost directly above the opposite row of lights, and she lay back and closed her eyes and sighed—and sobbed once—and was overcome by a leaden weariness.

Feet sounded on the plane. Some one slid back the hatch above her head, and a flashlight sprayed her upturned face. A dark face was peering down at her, its lips moving; but of course she could not hear—nineteen hours of engine roar had temporarily deafened her. But the face, beneath a visored military cap, was animated, smiling. Other heads appeared; arms were thrust down, and she reached up and helped them haul her body out of the cockpit. She was tall, taller than any of them. Standing on the ground, she wanted nothing more than sleep, but she waited, standing slack-legged, her head drooping, while they removed her parachute. The little man with the bright, dark face bowed, smiled, gestured, then tentatively took hold of her arm. She trudged beside him, bent way over, her eyes closing.

SHE awoke to the sound of singing birds. The sun's rays came in steep shafts through the blinds. Her arms were bare; she started, and found that now she wore pajamas of lemon yellow silk—her own. Her bag, open, lay on an ottoman near by, and her silk robe lay on a gilded chair, with her mules beneath. She threw back the covers, sat up, listened; then she rose and put on her robe.

The blinds opened on a courtyard, and there was a bed of azaleas and a high vine-strewn wall with a gateway shaped like a bell. The sun was high. A small brook ran through the garden, tinkling lightly. Tranquillity lay like a benediction on the courtyard.

Footfalls, metallic, rhythmic, began somewhere beyond the garden wall, drew nearer. A soldier came through the bell-shaped

gateway. He was Chinese, and had a round fat face, a scar, a belt with a holster slung from it. He disappeared around a projection of the house wall, and soon his footfalls vanished.

She turned at sound of a nearer, softer step, and saw a woman standing in the doorway. The woman was young, with ebony hair that appeared to have been lacquered down, rouged cheeks and much brocade and silk. She carried a tray across the room, set it down on the beaten brass coffee-table beside the *chaise-longue*. She gestured to the bag, the clothes, the bed, and said:

"I took the liberty of arranging you for sleep."

"Thanks. Where am I?"

"In China."

"Oh—in China." And with a dry, quick smile: "Small place, China."

The Chinese girl dipped her head toward the tray. "Some refreshments." She backed to the door, backed out. The tall girl shrugged, sat down on the *chaise-longue*. The broth was hot, tasty, the rice-cakes crisp. She drank two cups of fragrant tea. Afterward she rose, found a cigarette and lit it and stood again by the window. The sunlit peace, she thought, was heavenly; it put a quiet song in her heart that rose to a faint humming on her lips. She stretched luxuriantly.

When the savor of her cigarette had gone, she crushed it out, dressed. She put on a gray blouse, her gray cord breeches and black boots. An odd sense of exhilaration stirred in her blood. No one came, and presently she opened the door and stepped into a cool, dim corridor floored with marble. At the end, sunlight slanted in.

The garden was deserted, and she walked through it to a marble bench beneath an arbor and sat down, watching the brook bubble past. The man leaning in the shade at the corner of the building watched her for a few moments and then came forward. He wore breeches, boots and an old tweed jacket in whose large pockets his hands were sunk.

"Good-morning, Miss Haydran," he said.

"Oh, hullo. This is China, isn't it?"

"Yes," he said gravely, "this is China."

He was, she saw, very slender, with light brown hair cropped close, with a young but serious face, very tanned, very chiseled, and crisp brows.

He sat down opposite her, and said: "That was a very neat landing you made last night."

"I was surprised. I had no record of this field."

"There is no record of this field."

She looked up at him and found him regarding her candidly. "It's fortunate," he said, "that we learned by radio you were on your way. Otherwise the lights wouldn't have been turned on."

"Not turned on! Wouldn't you have given any disabled plane the chance—"

He was shaking his head. "No. It might have been a ruse."

"Why a ruse?"

He shrugged, brooded over his fingernails for a long moment and then raised his head and looked at her with what seemed like a haunted tenderness. "It must have been an awful haul. Aren't you tired?"

"I slept so well. Besides, the aches don't set in until a few days later. 'American, are you?'"

He nodded.

"War?" she asked.

"Generally."

"War's horrid."

"I suppose it is."

"Just what do you do?"

He made no reply.

"Forgive me," she said. "I'm rude."

"No. You're a very extraordinary woman."

She gave a short, reckless laugh. "I dare say that I'd be an extraordinary corpse if those lights last night hadn't been turned on at the field. So I owe you my life. Where am I?"

He shook his head a little grimly. "Can't tell you."

"Aren't you the big Poo-Bah here?"

"Uh-uh." He shook his head.

"Who is? May I see him?"

"No."

She chided: "Mystery! Mystery!" And then she stood up, said flatly: "But I must get on to Shanghai."

He rose too. "Not for a while." He was eye to eye with her. "I've been told to inform you you can't leave for a while."

She encompassed the garden with a gesture. "War? I never saw a place so peaceful."

"The war is not here," he told her quietly.

"But why can't I go on?"

"Several reasons."

She said: "You are mysterious."

"I don't mean to be. The situation demands I talk in riddles. Your curiosity—"

"I dare say I have a right to be curious!"

"...No," she said, quietly now. "Perhaps I haven't. I do owe you something for saving my life." She stared fixedly at the running brook. "Though I was curious about death, too. And yet if I had crashed—"

"You would not crash perhaps somewhere on the haul east from Shanghai."

"You seem to know— But of course, the radio."

"Shanghai to Guam. Guam to Hawaii. You'll never make it."

She smiled at him. "Now you're taking an interest in my welfare, aren't you?"

"I hate to see a courageous girl like you attempt suicide."

Her eyes flashed. "I must get to Shanghai."

"You will—but not presently."

"Then I must see about my plane."

"It's been fixed."

She was a little breathless. "Thanks—thank you."

"You will. I hope," he said, "be comfortable here. Some books and magazines have been sent to your room."

She was subdued a bit now. "May I walk outside the garden?"

"No." He added: "I'm sorry."

Beyond, she saw three uniformed men striding from the gate toward the house.

They were small, very dapper, and one swung a swagger-stick. They were Chinese.

She was desperate again. "Can't I—please—see the commanding officer?"

"No."

She was a little frightened; but afterward, lying on the *chaise-longue*, looking into the quiet sunlit garden, she was again recaptured by its subtle air of tranquillity. No one disturbed her. From time to time she heard the tramp of feet, saw uniformed men enter or leave by the bell-shaped gate. And by late afternoon she was very calm, very philosophic. From her meager traveling wardrobe she took a light frock, put it on. Dinner was brought to her room, and there was rice

wine. And while she ate, she heard elsewhere the muffled sound of men's voices.

Later, in the dark, when the moonlight lay like a mist over the garden, she leaned in the window. Memories came and stayed with her a while, and then went away as others crept in. And always, when she thought of Prescott, a bitter torment scared her soul.

A FIGURE emerged from a shadow and walked across the garden, in an unhurried, ruminative walk, with frequent pauses. She watched, turning her head, and at times she could see the straight brown head of the man. Half a dozen times he paced the garden's length; and then he must have seen her, for he came slowly toward the window and stood in shadow below.

"I wish," said his voice, "that you wouldn't continue beyond Shanghai."

"I have first, of course, to get to Shanghai."

"Be patient," his voice said idly.

She couldn't see his face.

"I suppose," she said, "you find it lonely here at times."

"At times, yes." The red bowl of his pipe glowed, then dimmed.

"I suppose you find it lonely up in the sky at times."

"At times. Very lonely."

"What would you rather have, life or an epitaph?"

A breeze stirred in the garden.

She chided gently: "Poetic, aren't you?"

"I'd hate to look on your epitaph."

"Guam," she said. "Hawaii. San Francisco. I can make it."

Her throat felt a little constricted, and she nodded to herself.

"I can make it."

(Please turn to page 72)

"HIS MEN BECAME DRUNK WITH
NOTORIETY; AMBITIOUS TOO
—THE LEADER DREW HIS GUN."



DARLING OF

A veritable literary gem is this magnificently told story of Lincoln's young protégé Colonel Elmer Ellsworth, a strange and fascinating adventurer who died as he had lived—madly in love with action.



COLONEL ELMER EPHRAIM ELLSWORTH.
"SECOND ONLY TO LINCOLN IN FAME
AND NATIONAL POPULARITY."



NOT least in importance on the special train that carried Abraham Lincoln to Washington for inauguration was Colonel Elmer Ephraim Ellsworth, twenty-four years old, welcome as the flowers that bloom in the spring. Committees ahead had been notified: "The President-elect will under no circumstances attempt to pass through any crowd until such arrangements are made as will meet the approval of Colonel Ellsworth, who is charged with the responsibility of all matters of this character."

Of the personages on the train he was second only to Lincoln in fame and national popularity. Since leaving Mechanicsville, New York, where his father was a tailor, he had been a train newsboy, New York dry-goods clerk, Hell Gate construction-gang worker. While an office clerk in Chicago he took over a run-down cadet company, and the reorganized Ellsworth Zouaves had swept the country, won championship colors, performed at West Point for regular army officers, and on the White House lawn heard President Buchanan: "If war should come, I know where you will be found—in the front ranks, battling against the enemy." Crowds, one of seventy thousand, had seen their "lightning drill" with

musket, bayonet, knapsack, in scarlet baggy trousers, red caps, blue jackets with orange and yellow trimmings. At more than one Ellsworth Zouave performance, branches of trees crashed with the spectators of the moving, dissolving troops forming cross, square, pyramid, human ladder, revolving circle. Banquets, swords, roses by the armful, were handed their short, well-knit leader, theatrical of stride, with "dark-brown hair that fell in careless, clinging curls about his neck, eyes of dark hazel that flashed and sparkled, a face smooth and fair as a maiden's, lips full and red, teeth of dazzling whiteness."

He enforced a régime; one Zouave who forgot himself with drink and women in Detroit was given a suit of citizen's clothes and a ticket home. The often skeptical John Hay wrote: "His words were like martial music, his strength extraordinary; he seemed made of tempered steel." Of his picked men a New York Sunday Mercury writer burred: "A fellow who can climb an eighty-foot rope, hand over hand, with a barrel of flour hanging to his heels; who can set a forty-foot ladder on end, balance himself on top of it and shoot wild pigeons on the wing, one at a

DESTINY

by

CARL SANDBURG

ELLSWORTH HAD CUT DOWN THE SECESSION FLAG.... A MAN JUMPED FROM A DARK PASSAGE, LEVELED A GUN.... CORPORAL BROWNELL SENT HIS OWN RIFLE SLUG INTO THE FACE OF ELLSWORTH'S KILLER.



ON MAY 24th, 1861, COLONEL ELLSWORTH WAS SHOT AFTER HE HAD REMOVED A CONFEDERATE FLAG FROM THIS HOTEL.

Painting by RICO TOMASO

time, just behind the eye; who can take a five-shooting revolver in each hand and knock the spots out of the ten of diamonds at eighty paces, turning somersaults all the time and firing every shot in the air—that is a Zouave."

The Springfield Grays commander, General John Cook, had written Ellsworth: "I have seen our friend Lincoln," whose wish is, "that you should make this place your home, and his office your headquarters." Further, wrote Cook: "He has taken in you a greater interest than I ever knew him to manifest in anyone before." And later Ellsworth had gone to Springfield, had made the Lincoln & Herndon office his headquarters, and delivered stump speeches alongside Bill Herndon in country towns for the Lincoln ticket. Only two years back, before his name became familiar to millions, he had written in a diary of what knighthood in Chicago cost him, of how he had gone without food in the midst of plenty, slept on hard boards, received only sneers and kicks and become "an old man of twenty-two." To a girl at Rockford, Illinois, he wrote: "Your letters are the only stars in my night of loneliness and trouble. Adieu. May God bless you."

And again later: "I would give my picture to no woman without your knowledge, as that would not accord with my conception of implicit confidence." John Hay heard him recite lines from Tennyson about "a glorious company, the flower of men," who would swear with conscience as king—

*To break the heathen and uphold the Christ,
To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,
To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,
To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,
To love one maiden only, cleave to her,
And worship her by years of noble deeds.*

He was a law student in the Lincoln & Herndon office "nominally," wrote John Hay, giving his time to an elaborate bill for militia reorganization in Illinois, which the legislature rejected, and to stump speaking, wherein his deliberate and impressive manner reminded audiences of that other short-statured orator, Steve Douglas.

"A relation like that of knight and squire of the age of chivalry



PARADE OF FIRE ZOUAVES RECRUITED FROM THE NEW YORK FIRE DEPARTMENT. TEN DIFFERENT PATTERNS OF RIFLE WERE CARRIED.

existed between Lincoln and Ellsworth," Henry C. Whitney gathered. As a law-student Ellsworth displayed no talent, according to Whitney, "and was something of a nuisance in the office, owing to his mislaying papers (one of Lincoln's most important speeches was lost to the world through Ellsworth's losing the transcription of it); yet Lincoln patiently bore with him, because he recognized in the young man's one passion, which was for arms, evidence of capacity for military leadership; and he sincerely respected him for it."

His sayings fitted his chosen rôle: "I am not better than other men. . . . Patriotism is not dead, even if it sleeps." Lincoln saw intellect, energy, self-control in this pet lamb of crowds, "a boy only" yet "surpassingly great" in power to command men. They had drawn closer until they were, as Lincoln put it, "as intimate as the disparity of our ages, and my engrossing engagements, would permit." To the photographer Hessler, Lincoln said after having seen the Zouaves drill and then meeting Ellsworth: "He is the greatest little man I ever met!" Lincoln saw in the boy a personal loyalty that belonged strictly in the adventure of the hour. "A taste altogether military," he saw also in the boy, "the best natural talent in that department I ever knew." In the purple shadows that lengthened out from Ellsworth's boyish

furme lurked a million of youths North and South ready to fight for a Cause, a Flag. They might bear fives and drums, bugles and brasses, the music of treading platoons marching into fog, black night and red thunder—and their feet would answer before their heads could fathom why.

FOR this young friend Lincoln after inauguration did the best he could, threw the full weight of his influence—then dropped the matter. "I have the positive promise of both Mr. Lincoln and Cameron to create the Bureau of Militia and make me chief of it," wrote Colonel Ellsworth from his sickbed in Willard's to his fiancée's father. His letter began, "I am very sick with measles," and closed, "Both Mr. Lincoln's children have the measles. I took it from them." He came and went as he pleased at the White House, was a favorite of the Lincoln children, of Mrs. Lincoln, of the two secretaries Nicolay and Hay. Lincoln had written but not signed nor sent an order on the Secretary of War detailing Lieutenant E. E. Ellsworth of the 1st Dragoons, for special duty as "inspector general of militia affairs, for the United States," for transaction of all business pertaining to the militia, to be conducted as a separate bureau of which Lieutenant Ellsworth would be chief, to promote uniform organization, drill, equipment,



ENCAMPMENT OF COLONEL ELLSWORTH'S NEW YORK FIRE ZOUAVES, ON THE HEIGHTS OPPOSITE THE NAVY YARD, WASHINGTON, D. C.

and instruction systems for the militia. "You will please assign him suitable office room, furniture, etc., and provide him with a clerk and messenger, printing, stationery, access to records, etc., as he may desire. . . . Also provide, if you please, in such manner as will best answer the purpose, for a monthly payment to Lieut. Ellsworth, for this extra duty, sufficient to make his pay and emoluments equal to that of a major of cavalry." (Appointment as a regular army lieutenant was the first step.)

The next morning Lincoln was to sign this order, deliver it to the Secretary of War, and close the transaction. On that day, however, Ellsworth met Colonel E. V. Sumner of the regular army, who had heard that Ellsworth was to be made a regular army major on short notice, and who with emphasis made known two points: (1) that half the captains in the army were, and had been, seeking the appointment for years; (2) that the appointment would rouse the ill will of these men against Mr. Lincoln; and so forth.

Hearing this from Colonel Sumner, wrote Ellsworth to his fiancée's mother, "I sent to Mr. Cameron and asked him if he was ready to sign the papers; he said he was. Then I related the conversation which had just occurred" (with Col. Sumner), "and told him that I would do nothing to cause ill feeling toward Mr. Lincoln or himself, and that I would not, therefore, take the Majority. That's the manner in which I kicked myself out of a three-thousand-dollar life position into the cold. Mr. Cameron said I could rely upon him; both he and Mr. Lincoln being my friends, they could take care of me. The next best thing was to take a lieutenantcy—about \$1,850 a year (Cameron has positively promised to make it up to three thousand dollars) and be ordered to duty at Washington and placed in charge of my Bureau. All the papers are drawn up. . . . The next step will be to ask Congress to create the Bureau by law." The White House view of Ellsworth and his negotiations was phrased by John Hay:

He was a strange anomaly at the capital. He did not care for money or luxury. Though sensitive in regard to his reputation, for the honor of his work, his motto always was that of the sage Merlin, "I follow use, not fame."

An office-seeker of this kind was an eccentric and suspicious personage. The hungry thousands that crowded and pushed at Willard's thought him one of them, only deeper and slier. The simplicity and directness of his character, his quick sympathy and thoughtless generosity, and his delicate sense of honor unfitted him for such a scramble. He withdrew from the contest for the position he desired, and the President, who loved him like a younger brother, made him a lieutenant in the army, intending to detail him for special service.

The jealousy of the staff-officers of the regular army, who always discover in any effective scheme of militia reform the overthrow of their power, and who saw in the young Zouave the promise of brilliant and successful innovation, was productive of very serious annoyance and impediment to Ellsworth. In the midst of this, he fell sick at Willard's. . . . We were talking one night of coming probabilities, and I spoke of the doubt so widely existing as to the loyalty of the people. He rejoined, "I can only speak for myself. You know I have a great work to do, to which my life is pledged; I am the only earthly stay of my parents; there is a young woman whose happiness I regard as dearer than my own; yet I could ask no better death than to fall next week before Sumter."

For Ellsworth's use in any way he saw fit toward connecting with military service Lincoln wrote a letter which phrased in a formal and precise manner his direct conversational remark to Cameron and the army officers: "I want Ellsworth to have a good place." The tone of it indicated he had become aware that he and Ellsworth in what they had first tried to do would have been a little too abrupt for army methods of the moment. Addressing Col. E. E. Ellsworth as "My dear Sir" he wrote:

Ever since the beginning of our acquaintance, I have valued you highly as a person [a] friend, and at the same time (without much capacity for judging) have had a very high estimate of your military talent. Accordingly I have been, and still am anxious for you

to have the best position in the military which can be given you, consistently with justice and proper courtesy towards the older officers of the Army. I cannot incur the risk of doing them injustice, or a discourtesy; but I do say they would personally oblige me, if they could, and would place you in some position, or in some service, satisfactory to yourself.

Thus the friendship of the elderly President for the Zouave youth proceeded. Ellsworth knew it was all that could be done.

BY May 9, of '61, some twenty thousand troops were in Washington. They included Colonel Elmer E. Ellsworth and his regiment of Fire Zouaves recruited in ten days by the Colonel from Fire Department men of New York City. He could have had two regiments, but was taking only as many as he had equipment for. New Yorkers had raised a fund of sixty thousand dollars for uniforms and arms. Ten different patterns of rifles were carried by his red-trousered ranks. In their stand of colors was a crimson silk flag presented by Mrs. John Jacob Astor, and another banner given by the actress Laura Keane. In the farewell parade in New York, five thousand city firemen marched and cheered.

Arrived in Washington, the ex-firemen quartered in a tall storehouse let themselves down to the street by rope from the third story like so many monkeys. Some of them terrified tavern-keepers by charging meals to the Southern Confederacy. They hooted and frolicked, chased imaginary secessionists through the streets, held mock sessions in the Halls of Congress, dissolved the Union



"A FELLOW WHO CAN SET A FORTY-FOOT LADDER ON
END, BALANCE HIMSELF ON TOP OF IT AND SHOOT
WILD PIGEONS ON THE WING. . . . THAT IS A ZOUAVE!"

and reconstructed it, capered along perilous parapets of the Capitol building, knocked down the regularly assigned sentinels, hung like monkeys from the outer edges of the base of the dome two hundred feet in midair.

Colonel Ellsworth paid for some of their damages out of his own pocket and took steps to discipline twelve rowdies on whom he blamed the pranks. At the swearing-in of the regiment, generals and Senators formed a group around the President standing hand in hand with young Tad. When a small hotel next to Willard's broke into a big fire, the Fire Zouaves smashed doors of engine-houses and had streams of water going before the regular department arrived. They formed pyramids on one another's shoulders, climbed up lightning-rods like squirrels, suspended a man head-first from the burning roof so he could reach a hose sent up from below. Mr. Willard gave them thanks and a big breakfast. Then they were put in camp four miles south of the city. Meanwhile, Ellsworth came and went at the Executive Mansion as one of the trusted favorites.

In a bright moonlight on May 24, at two o'clock in the morning, squads of cavalry crossed the bridges leading from Washington across the Potomac into Virginia, and were followed by infantry and engineers who began a work of crowning every hill for miles with defense trenches for the protection of the little ten-mile-square District of Columbia. (Please turn to page 71)

MAID OF MONEY

A novel of today that dares to ask
some almost unanswerable questions.

The Story Thus Far:

ON the morning of this fateful day George Bartlow had seen the tabloid headlines telling the world that his wife Alice had obtained a divorce from him in Paris. . . . Alice, whom he hated, who had taught him to fear all women as fortune-hunters. Alice—whom he yet longed for. . . .

"What's wrong with me?" demanded Bartlow of his confidential man Thomas. And Thomas with his customary candor replied: "There's nothing wrong with you, sir, except that you were making oodles of money while the rest of the world was losing its shirt."

"What's wrong with that?"

"Nothing—nothing, as far as I'm concerned. But the Reverend Byrnell—"

Thomas had told only part of the story. It was true that Bartlow in that year of damnation 1929, when only a broker's clerk, had had the sagacity to appraise the October panic correctly, and the courage to risk his savings in selling short. He had had the further acumen and hardihood a few months later to catch his former employers in a tight corner and force them to take him into partnership. . . . Wall Street's Miracle Boy!

And not long afterward he had continued the triumphant progress in proper story-book fashion: he had married beautiful Alice Paynton, daughter of the senior partner. There, however, the story-book history ended, and realism struck rudely in. A short honeymoon; then, when he had settled a huge trust-fund on his wife and another on her father, the lady's affection swiftly cooled. . . .

Bartlow and Thomas had come on an odd errand this Sunday evening, to the shabby little mission church of the Reverend Byrnell. For Bartlow had planned a real-estate development in the block that included the church; but the clergyman refused to consider his offer.

"I'M NOT INTERESTED IN YOUR EXPLANATIONS," SAID BARTLOW. "WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE, ANYWAY?"

by EDWIN BALMER

and

FREDERICK VAN RYN

They waited in line to speak to the Reverend Byrnell after the short service was over, when a girl approached the platform ahead of them, a girl whose resemblance to Alice, who had divorced Bartlow, was overpowering. Her eyes were like Alice's—like them, but not nearly so cold. Not calculating, this girl. Her eyes were wider apart, too; and her lips were fuller. Her figure—yes, it was Alice's in perfection.

"How do you do?" Bartlow said to her. "Haven't I met you somewhere before?"

"No," she replied quietly, "you never met me; but you may have seen me in your office."

"In my office. Which one? I have several."

"I know," she said. "The one I work in is the accounting department of the Transocean Trust."

"I see," Bartlow said, and he repeated it nervously. "I see." Was he to let this girl—any girl—get him? "What's your name?"

"Joan Darleith."

"Tell me," he interposed as she moved forward, "are you by any chance related to—to the Winford Payntons?"

"Not as far as I know," she said, and passed him.

Bartlow turned, and found Thomas behind him.

"You know that girl?"

"Certainly, sir." Thomas had discovered her only a few moments before. "She's Miss Darleith."

"She works in my office?"

"In your Wall Street office, sir," Thomas asserted.

"Very well. Transfer her to my private office tomorrow morning."

Meanwhile Joan was speaking to the young Reverend Byrnell: was explaining to him that she had strayed into the church by chance, that the work interested her, and she would like to help, perhaps with the singing—she was studying music, though she supported herself by stenography. And between these two chance-met people a spark was somehow kindled.

Perhaps this made her the more resentful of Bartlow's interest in her—though the fact that this interest was based on her accidental resemblance to his estranged wife was not specially irritating. And she had been working in his private office only a few days when an episode occurred which solidified her dislike. Tommy Grayforth came to see Bartlow to ask an extension of his loan—Tommy Grayforth whom she had known in happier days and who had once asked her to marry him. Whether Bartlow had found out about this, she did not know, but in her presence he refused, in a needlessly humiliating fashion, to extend Tommy's loan. . . . After that Joan asked a transfer back to her old job, and the request was granted. But Bartlow had not lost interest. He went to her singing-teacher and tried to arrange a purchased success for her as a concert singer. (*The story continues in detail.*)

JUSTIN DARLEITH aroused at the sound below. He was not sleeping well of late, even on cool nights; and this midsummer night was hot and breezy.

Illustrated by
R. F. SCHABELITZ



He had left his bedroom door ajar, and now he heard, plainly, the opening of the front door of his house.

He got up and stepped to the top of the stairs.

"Who is it?"

"I, Father."

"Joan! Why—" Justin was slightly confused, though he had not been fast asleep. "Joan—it's Friday night, isn't it?"

He meant, "What's happened? What is the matter?" For it was on Saturday that Joan returned to Darleith, when she came home at all, in these days.

"Friday, Father," Joan said, her fingers finding the light-switch. "I've been given an extra day this week-end. I'm free Saturday. That's all. I'm not dismissed."

THE light was on now, and Justin looked down at her. Something had happened, he was sure; she had not just come home a night earlier.

"You came out alone?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Why didn't you phone me?"

"It was ten when I decided to come. I knew Hexter would be at the station. He drove me over." Hexter was the local cabman.

"You've had supper?"

"Hours ago in New York."

She was coming up the stairs, and Justin watched her, appreciating again how graceful she was—how well, how very well indeed, she might marry, if she would.

Joan, on her part, observed him. She stopped at the top of the stairs.

"Have things become harder for you, Father?"

"Harder?" he said; and he met her eyes with an impulse to deny it. By day, and dressed, he might have denied it; but this was night, and he stood disheveled before his daughter in his pajamas and the dressing-gown he had hastily pulled over them.

"Things have become more—inconvenient, this week," he admitted.

"How inconvenient?"

"Never mind," he said hastily, too hastily.

"I hoped," said Joan, in the low voice of night, when others were asleep, "things might be becoming better."

"They are better—for most people. Business is improving—decidedly. Money is coming back to other men," he admitted bitterly, "but not to me. I can hold on. I've still some credit."

"But nothing else, Father?"

"Damned little cash," he confessed. "And cash—you simply have to have some."

"I see," said Joan; and she gazed toward the door which he had closed behind him when he came into the hall.

"Does Mother know?"

"Oh, yes; she knows; but I have not told her."

Joan kissed him gently; and she slipped past him into the refuge of her own room.

She moved about her room as she undressed slowly, reconsidering her own position and purpose here.

Here was a large, lovely room with old furniture endowed both with beauty and dignity; her home throughout was beautiful and dignified; such a place ought to be—but it was not—secure. Ought she—was it her duty to provide security and continuity to it? If it were, she was going about it in a strange way, having invited Alan Byrnell to be her guest here tomorrow.

It was something to show to him—this home of hers; this background, this environment. It was her heritage that she offered him; yet what an empty offer! For if she married Alan Byrnell, or any other poor man, she sacrificed her home; she simply tossed it to the creditors.

But she was proud to have it for Alan tomorrow, at least. What a relief to be with him in this pleasant place, where they could have hours together cool, comfortable, secure, uninterrupted and alone. She tried not to think of her father and mother; she lay in bed planning where Alan and she would walk together, and where they would rest.

Joan came down to breakfast late, intentionally; but her father and mother both were awaiting her in the dining-room. They had finished their breakfast, but they were still at the table, and as

they turned at Joan's approach, they made her feel more than ever a traitor to them.

She saw that her mother was dressed, as usual now, for the day; her mother long ago had given up the indulgences of negligence. She had housework before her, and plenty of it, since she was obliged to "do," in these days, with one maid. Elizabeth Darleith was utterly unsuited to housework.

Joan went to her mother and kissed her, spoke to her father, and slipped into the place set for her at the table.



"How was your week, Joan?" her mother inquired.

"All right," said Joan. "It was hot, of course."

"It must have been stifling in the city. . . . Then things have been going well with you, dear?"

"Well?" Joan repeated, wondering how she could encompass in a word her experience of the last five days. "Very well," she replied, and looked down and began to eat her melon.

Her father drove more directly to the point.

"How are your friends in the city?"

"Friends—you mean Mary?"

"Your father had an idea," Elizabeth put in, "that you had some reason for suddenly coming home last night."

"I had," Joan admitted.

"Oh!" said her mother, and waited; and Joan, looking up, found her father's eyes also upon her.

"I saw Tommy Grayforth," she said; and the next instant she would have taken it back, if she could.

Her father straightened a bit and glanced at her mother.



"WE SHALL BE GLAD TO SEE ANYONE WHOM YOU HAVE INVITED," WAS ALL THAT HER FATHER MANAGED TO SAY.

"Tommy Grayforth!" he said; and Joan knew that she had given him hope. Oh, why had she told him of Tommy? She had not meant to; she had meant merely to delay telling them of Alan—and this had come out.

"Tommy looked you up, Joan?" her mother asked.

"No; I met him in the office."

"You mean he came there to see you?"

"No, he didn't know I was there. He had no idea I was working there; but after he found me, he did take me out to lunch."

"Oh!" Elizabeth breathed and sought her husband's eyes. She turned again to Joan. ("And then what?" Her intake of breath asked more anxiously than any words could have done.)

"Tommy was at the office because he is in trouble," Joan blurted out to her father.

"Trouble?"

"Financial trouble," she explained. She remembered that she ought not to discuss, even with her parents, any confidential matter which came to her attention at the office; but this was different. She had to destroy the illusion upon which her father and mother both were building—that Tommy Grayforth had reappeared to save them. "He came to see Mr. Bartlow because he is in great difficulties."

"They cannot be more than temporary," her father said. "The Graythorns have enormous resources."

"Then they've gone through them," Joan said miserably. "Besides, whatever Tommy has or hasn't, Father, he can never mean anything to me. I've invited some one else—entirely different—today."

"Some one else?"

"His name is Alan Byrnell."

"Who?"

"The Reverend Alan Byrnell."

"Reverend?"

"He's a missionary, Mother."

"A missionary?"

"A city missionary now. He preaches in a little chapel a couple of blocks away from where I live. He used to work in the foreign field—China and Africa. But now he's a city missionary, working among the destitute in New York."

"How did you meet him?"

"I went to his mission. . . . And I've seen him several times since. I asked him out here for the day. You said I could always ask anyone I wanted."

"You can; we are always glad to have you. But—a missionary, Joan! And you speak as if you knew him—well."

"I do."

Joan looked at her father now, and met his dismay. If she had announced that her invited guest for the day was the only surviving member of the Karpis gang, or a savage from Africa, she could not have caused more consternation.

Her mother glanced at her father, and left the room. Justin Darleith found no way to deal with this announcement. "We shall be glad to see anyone whom you have invited," was all that he managed to say.

Chapter Nine

YOUNG Reverend Alan Byrnell was on the train, seated comfortably—as far as physical considerations went—in one of the New Haven's new air-cooled coaches; but mentally and emotionally, he was much disturbed. Undeniably he was desiring marriage too much—marriage to Joan Darleith. He could not put her out of his mind, or free his feelings from longing for her.

Alan was perfectly familiar with the ecclesiastical pronouncement about marriage. Matrimony—as the church preferred to call it—was admittedly "an honorable estate, instituted of God in the time of man's innocence. . . . and commended of Saint Paul to be honorable among all men."

Alan himself had repeated those assurances frequently in reading the marriage services to the couples who came to him; but he had never applied the idea seriously to himself. He had believed that he ought to be one of the men "above" marriage—above the need of a woman.

He belonged to a devoted little sect, the Nicæans, which had broken off from the Church of England centuries ago and gone its own way, but which still utilized many of the Episcopal forms. It left to each minister's conscience the choice between marriage and celibacy; and the majority of its few preachers were married men; but not the one or two men of greatest influence and fame.

Father Crassingway of the Congo mission, for instance, with whom Alan had served: He was a great leader, and also a physician working tirelessly against the ravages of the African

sleeping-sickness. He was a celibate; and Alan believed that Father Crassingway never could have done his double work and gained the same position of influence, if he had been married.

Alan had planned to follow the example of Father Crassingway. Then what did it mean that the Reverend Alan Byrnell, on this hot July morning, was in the air-cooled coach journeying to Darleith, Connecticut, to be the guest for the day of Joan Darleith? At least Alan was not dishonest with himself; it meant that he wanted closer acquaintance with her—marriage.

The train, though it was an express, seemed to him only to crawl. He sat still with an effort, containing his impatience.

DARLEITH.

The name—her name—on the station brought to him a pang of conscience. Her people were, or recently had been, of the privileged, the powerful, the wealthy. The fact that he had not even suspected that, when first he had met her, did not undo the compunction for the moment paralyzed him as the train stopped. He conquered it and leaped up.

There was Joan on the platform; the man beside her, undoubtedly her father. A patrician, a privileged patrician. . . . Alan stepped down. As he spoke to Joan, and when he took her hand within his own, he forgot that anyone else was with her. His pulses pressed; and he gave himself to the delightful excitement she stirred. It unsteadied and exhilarated him like a light intoxication.

"Alan! I'm so glad you were able to come!"

"I would have been less able—not to," he replied to her, and it was like a confession.

"That's nice," she said, a flush of color passing over her face. "Alan, this is my father."

Alan realized, then, that he had been clinging to her hand, for now he had to relinquish it for her father's questioning handclasp.

"What do you mean to do here?" that handclasp asked, while Justin Darleith's words gave him formal greeting.

Alan was accustomed to polite disapproval of himself.

Justin opened the rear door of his car and motioned Alan in. Alan wanted to wait for Joan to get in, but he gave her father his hand and entered. Justin closed the door, but Joan reopened it and seated herself beside her guest. Justin, without comment, took the front seat alone, and drove them home.

The house and the grounds were a surprise to Alan, Joan saw; as he realized that this was her home, the size and stateliness of the place dismayed him, and this increased her own excitement. She "meant" something more to him.

"It is beautiful," he said, looking out.

"It's very old—for America," Joan replied. "Of course not old—for China." She was proud of her home, as never before. Oh, it was something to offer to a man as a possession once, even if lost later!

Her father put up the car, and so Joan alone showed Alan into the house and to the drawing-room.

"Mother, this is Alan Byrnell."

"How do you do, Mrs. Darleith?"

"How do you do? —Should I say *Dr. Byrnell*?"

"No. I am not a doctor, either of medicine or divinity."

"But you are a missionary, my daughter tells me."

"A missionary; yes," Alan said, and smiled as confidently as he could. He well recognized the tones which told that he was being treated as a daring invader. He accepted the situation, and it added to his poise.

Another patrician, this mother, slender, straight, and with her proportions still almost perfect. She was not strong-looking, but she had never striven to be that; she looked even fragile—but lovely.

(He thought, with a pang: "Joan will be—or should be—like that all her life, slender, almost slight and fragile, but safe and youthful into her late years, because she will have been protected. But how can I protect her?")

Alan gazed at Joan hungrily, and then returned to her mother. "Shan't we sit down?" she said.

"Thank you."

"You have been in China, I hear, Mr. Byrnell."

"Yes; I was born there."

"Fancy! I really know little of China, except the troubles in the newspaper headlines. And then, of course, 'The Good Earth.' . . . You are in America only temporarily, then? You are returning, surely."

"Sometime; but when, I don't know."

"You speak Chinese, do you?"

"I speak the language of the province in which I was born. In fact, I learned it before I learned English," Alan said.

"Fancy! Then I certainly think that you would consider China your chosen field."

Elizabeth Darleith's tone was entirely polite, almost to the point of appearing disinterested; but it did not deceive Joan. And Joan saw that it failed to deceive Alan. He recognized the disapproval of himself; but he gave no sign.

"I liked working in China," he said cheerfully. "I also like working here. There is something to be said for the theory that the most effective missionary work which Americans could perform would be to put our own house in order, both economically and spiritually."

"So you feel that we need your help more than the Chinese."

"My help," said Alan, not permitting himself to take offense, "is a microscopic matter, at best. Just now, I believe my place is here." He smiled in his disarming way. "Do you know that the educated Chinese happen to look upon America much as we look upon China? A very sincere Chinese gentleman—a friend of my father's—seriously inquired if my father did not feel it was taking considerable of a risk, sending me here to be exposed to American conditions."

"China certainly," Elizabeth Darleith insisted, "is your chosen field."

"Mother," Joan interrupted hastily, "I wanted Alan out for the day, to take him away from work and missions and—"

"THERE'S a star."

"It's only the evening star, not a star of light. We'll have twilight a long time yet."

"You want it to last, Joan?"

"Don't you?"

"Forever," Alan confessed. "And the night never come." For at night, as they both knew, he had to return to New York.

They were on the river and resting, now, in a little tree-girt channel in which the

tide had just begun to ebb slowly toward the distant sea.

Alan had his coat off, but he had ceased to paddle; he merely made a thrust now and then to keep the drifting canoe away from the banks. Joan lay back against the cushions in the bow. She was in white, and the cushions were bright and gay, yellow and blue and red, softened to pastel tints in the twilight.

In a field near by, the cicadas rasped their shrill welcome to the warm and breezeless dusk. Otherwise, it was very still and remote here on the little river; the rare thrust of the paddle was, for several minutes, the only sound. . . .

Joan and Alan, during their day, had passed beyond any requirement of chatter. He gazed down at her, and thought again how slender and sweet she was; and how she had gone with him through the day. What a wife—what a wife she would make for him!

She lay looking at his shoulders, so lean and strong; and at his face, lean and strong too; and his impetuous, unruly red hair. The light had failed, so that she had to remember that it was auburn and boyish, curling a little when it went damp in the heat of the day. They had talked together of thousands and thousands of things; and they had so many left to explore between them.

She thought: "He has a far better body than Tommy Gray-ford, and a far, far better mind; their characters are incomparable. I like to be with him." She almost said the words: "I like to be with you, Alan Byrnell! Oh, why, why must it be a calamity if I marry you?"

He thought: "She'll only help me in my work. How can she—she—possibly be a hindrance?" And he almost said: "I want you and need you. Oh, I need you so!"

Such was this silence between them. (Please turn to page 98)

In Our Next Issue

"FAITHFULLY YOURS"



A Christmas NOVELETTE

by

Pearl S. Buck

Nothing to Get Mad About

by

BAIRD HALL

Illustrated by
ALAN FOSTER

LUCY smashed a whole set of dishes last evening. Don't get me wrong. She wasn't throwing them at me or any funny-paper stuff like that. Lucy's not that sort. She's a regular queen.

Besides, it wasn't a fight. We're crazy about each other—have been, from the first day. Or at least I have. And I remember the first day.

I got transferred to the head office, and came in—on a Monday, it was. There was Lucy. Class? Well, she was just a little queen.

"She's the girl," I said to myself right then; and I've never changed my idea.

And Lucy? She was a cute one. Lucy never saw any of the boys around the office. Never saw any of us. The Lord had fixed it so her nose was turned up in the air naturally. And she didn't waste time with the rough-and-tumble kidding around the place.

Of course she had to mind her *p's* and *q's* because she worked for Mr. Mertan himself. There's a guy. He's high hat. And I mean real high hat—not one of your snooty imitations. He couldn't be any politer to his own mother than he is to Gwenny on the board. Everybody likes Mr. Mertan; only of course you feel easier when he's in his own office with the door shut.

Still and all, Lucy worked right with him. And she thought he was about tops. That's a pretty good test, I'd say—when a guy's own secretary thinks he's tops. Lucy won't admit it, but she picked up a lot of Mr. Mertan's ways of saying things, and she still uses them.

Well, once I'd spotted Lucy I didn't sit around waiting for her to drop a handkerchief beside my desk. Selling is my business, and I wasn't going to miss a sale on the biggest little thing that ever came into my life. I tried to date Lucy for lunch the first day. Then I tried for every meal after that, breakfasts included. It wasn't many days till I quit the breezy line and settled into it for earnest. Lucy got so she would say no in a nice way, but she al-



LUCY'S VOICE WAS QUIET AND STEADY: "I'LL NEVER MARRY YOU."

ALAN
FOSTER

ways said no. She had to type some report or get some letter into the air-mail.

It was tough, too. Mr. Mertan must be worth a couple of million, but you'd never think it the way he works. He kept Lucy plenty busy. Oh, no whip-cracking, you understand. Not at all.

Why, I've been in the general office when Lucy was at the files and Mr. Mertan came along.

"May I see you when you finish there, Miss Owen?" he'd say. "No hurry—whenever you're free."

Of course Lucy'd make

himself not last another minute unless she was there to tend to it personally.

Finally I got sore, one day over by the water-cooler. I told her straight out that she'd got the idea Mr. Mertan couldn't do a lick of work without her being around to hold his hand. She turned red and mad and lit into me. Just the same, a few days later she let me have my first date. Or at least she let me in when I found the flat where she and her mother and two brothers lived up in the Bronx.

Then not so long after that she told me to take her out to dinner—yes sir, *told* me. You could have knocked me over with the Empire State. It was the afternoon she was dancing mad because Mrs. Mertan had come in the office. I blew us to beefsteak and mushrooms at the Shanty, so I was pretty peeved when Lucy wouldn't talk about anything but what a pain Mrs. Mertan was, and how she wasted the boss' money, and badgered him to go out with her in high society.

For all I know, the boss' wife may be one of those Park Avenue gold-diggers. But it's a cinch Mr. Mertan can afford her if he wants to, and anyway, like I see it, that's his own business. I told Lucy so straight.

"And what's more, Lucy," I told her, "you better get over poking into Mr. Mertan's private affairs, or people will begin thinking you got something personal with the guy." (Please turn to page 120)

The Idol



"I THINK I'LL SAY GOOD NIGHT NOW" SHE
FALTERED, A NOTE OF PANIC IN HER VOICE.

"CORRIE!" Little Mrs. Bates had seen a masculine shadow turn the corner by the Methodist church. Clutching her palm-leaf fan, she leaned forward in the porch rocker, smiling, alert. "Corrie!" she warned again, for she had recognized the young man before he passed the first lamp-post. Dark-haired and tall, he came eddying toward them down the street.

But Corrie wouldn't turn her head to look at him. She sat there on the front steps, wearing the new blue challis they had hurried so to finish that afternoon (sewing steadily through the midsummer heat), and it just matched the blue of her eyes. But in spite of all the trouble her mother had taken to help her look her prettiest this evening, Corrie sat there now pretending indifference.

Little Mrs. Bates herself was pink-checked with excitement. She knew the porch bulb shed a flood of light upon them—that anyone could see they were both home and ready for callers; so she leaned farther forward to nod and wave her fan hospitably. But the young man opposite paused only for a heart-beat, then kept on his way right past the house.

Mrs. Bates watched him in stricken silence.

The palm-leaf fan in her hand gave a convulsive flutter. "You ought to have gone down to the gate!"

Corrie shrugged her shoulders.

"Why did you wave to him, Mamma? He could have stopped if he'd wanted to," she said.

Mrs. Bates ignored this. Corrie could pretend it didn't mean anything to have Ray Miller go downtown on the opposite side of the street a second evening. She, Cora Bates, knew what it meant. It meant another young man had given up coming to see them. And in a town of this size, who was there left?

But she was careful not to show her panic. She waited a few minutes before suggesting: "Why don't you take my purse, Corrie, and go downtown and buy one of the new movie magazines? Then you could stop in at the drug-store for a soda on your way back."

"Why should I, Mamma? It's no use."

That was the trouble with Corrie—she would never *do* anything! You lay awake half the night planning a dress for her; you made the porch attractive with gladioluses and chintz cushions; you even made a pitcher of lemonade and put it in the icebox; and then, in spite of what she must know you were hoping, Corrie would just sit there and let herself be deserted again. Every neighbor on the street could see that she no longer had a caller as an excuse for burning all the downstairs lights.

The click of the gate, just then, seemed to disprove this. Clutching her fan, Mrs. Bates half rose to peer down the front walk, and then sank back in the rocker again—because it was only Horace Weatherby: kindly, bald and commonplace. For years it had been his habit to drop in like this once a week, to sit and gaze at Corrie; and as an old friend, they were glad enough to have him come. But he was middle-aged, and so his devotion didn't count.

"I saw you two were alone," he apologized.

For younger callers Mrs. Bates had a little ritual of welcome, a tugging of chairs into cozier proximity, a heaping of extra cushions, all this to the accompaniment of gay laughter and tinkling bracelets. But for Horace Weatherby tonight it wasn't worth while to make such an effort. Corrie's smile asked to be welcome enough.

"If it hadn't been so hot, I was going to ask you girls to go down to the Strand with me," he confided. "The 'Idol' is a first-rate picture. I saw it last night."

He settled himself diffidently in the big wicker chair—"Ray's chair"—and took his old-fashioned cigar-case out of his pocket.

He needn't feel so sure they would have gone with him, Mrs. Bates reflected tartly. She had always dreaded people's thinking his attentions meant anything serious in Corrie's life, because nothing placed a girl so unfairly as having a middle-aged suitor dangle after her. People who didn't know might get the idea she was older than she was.

"What was the picture about?" Corrie asked, with pretty interest. "Well, it's kind of high-flown melodrama, laid in India, and not very much like life as we know it," Horace Weatherby sighed. His mild brown eyes were smiling at her as he began telling her the plot. Because he was a lawyer, he went into details interminably. But Mrs. Bates didn't have to listen to him. She sat there in her white-collared frock, looking little more than a girl herself, biting her lips with disappointment. There was no use pretending Ray Miller hadn't gone the way of Corrie's other boy friends; and the worst of it was you could never find out their reasons for acting as they did. They'd call a few times, until you thought they were interested, and then suddenly they'd disappear without explanation, and thereafter they'd elude you, keep out of your sight. Even when you met them downtown, by chance, and exclaimed brightly, "What a surprise! Corrie was saying the other day she thought you'd forgotten all

about us!" they'd just stand there stammering, hat in hand; and the only result of your forgiveness seemed to be that you met them less and less often after that. And now Ray Miller was behaving like the rest of them. Mrs. Bates had watched it happen too often before not to know precisely what it meant. . . .

"You see, after they'd all been captured by the natives, the English girl found out that this older fellow, the colonel, had been in love with her right along, just as much as the young fellow had," Horace Weatherby was explaining hesitantly.

Mrs. Bates had almost forgotten he was there, still talking about his movie. Now she focused him with a startled glance. For the first time this evening she really looked at him. She noticed that he was wearing a new white mohair suit, glossily shined brown shoes, and that his socks, tie and maroon silk handkerchief all matched. He had dressed with special care to come to call on them. The tone of his voice actually sounded as if he were trying to speak up for himself.

She stopped fanning and sat rapt in conjecture. . . . Of course, Horace was no longer young—he must be forty-five, at least; and he wasn't the romantic figure she had dreamed of for a son-in-law. But he was settled, dependable and thoroughly devoted to them. Perhaps, after all, with a little encouragement—

She said to Corrie: "It's so hot, dear, why don't you make us a pitcher of your nice lemonade? And be sure to put in plenty of ice."

Corrie rose obediently, and Horace Weatherby sprang to open the screen door for her. He smiled down on her blonde head.

"She's one sweet little girl!" he confided to her mother as he settled himself again in the wicker chair and took another cigar from his brown-leather case.

Mrs. Bates acknowledged the compliment with a flutter of her fan. "But I don't know how much longer we'll be able to keep her with us," she sighed. "There's a new young man—who's very attentive!"

Horace Weatherby held the match-flame away from the tip of the cigar he had been about to light. "What's that?"

"Of course, I'm not sure yet if there's anything *to* it," Mrs. Bates murmured, lowering her voice. "But I can't help noticing how often Ray comes here."

"Ray Miller, you mean?"

MRS. BATES' small white hand smoothed down her violet skirt. "You know, he's just started working in the office of the lumber company, and he's only earning eighteen dollars a week; but Mr. Price told me himself the understanding was that he'd raise him to twenty as soon as he made good."

"You went down there—to ask?"

"I went down to ask about having the house re-shingled next fall, and Mr. Price happened to see me bowing to Ray at his desk."

Horace Weatherby's face had clouded while he listened.

Mrs. Bates was observing this. She continued: "Ray's been transferred here from the West Dorset lumber company, and though he's a stranger, I happen to have found out a good deal about him lately—by chance. I had a letter from Cousin Sarah Parker last week. She says Ray's been in West Dorset two years. She says everyone liked him, and from all she can hear he's a real smart young fellow and sure to make good. She says a girl needn't hesitate—"

"You wrote—to find out?"

"Ray had just begun calling here—and remember, Corrie is all I've got! So I have to be father and mother to her, both. I know eighteen dollars a week doesn't seem very much to set up house-keeping on, but when I had my little talk with him the other evening, I pointed out that if Corrie ever married, she and her husband could have a home here, rent free, right under my roof. And we could divide the living expenses. I'm a good manager—"

Horace Weatherby still stared at her with perplexed brown eyes. The match he held in his fingers had long since burned itself out. "But I thought I saw Ray Miller on the Sparr girls' porch last night—and again just now as I came up the street. So I supposed he—"

Mrs. Bates laughed deprecatingly and adjusted her bracelets. "There may have been some little quarrel. I don't pretend to know about that. But I do know Ray went past the gate awhile ago, and if Corrie had made the least sign to him he would have stopped."

She got up to bring extra cushions for Horace's chair, to empty his ash-try over the railing for him, and to put it back on the table within more convenient reach. As she sat down again, she drew the rocker closer. "Corrie may have let Ray go by because she hoped you were coming. You know we always call Thursday your night." She waited, to give her next remark more significance. "Sometimes I've wondered, Horace, if she really cared for any of these boys who are always underfoot here; I've asked (Please turn to page 86)

A story of springtime,
and of autumn love.

by CHAPIN HOWARD



Illustrated by JOSEPH NUSSDORF

The HOLLOW DRAGON

MISS MERRIVEL always said (she said) that the Lord took care of everything; and she reaffirmed it now with undiminished faith, although she was careful to add in her vigorous contralto that it didn't hurt to help Him out if you could.

"And can you?" asked Mr. Ellery Queen a trifle rebelliously, for he was a notorious heretic, besides having been excavated from his bed without ceremony by Djuna at an absurd hour to lend ear to Miss Merrivel's curiously inexplicable tale. And if this robust and bountiful young woman—she was as healthy-looking and as overflowing as a cornucopia—had come only to preach, Ellery firmly intended to send her about her business and return to bed.

"Can I?" echoed Miss Merrivel grimly. "*Can I!*" And she took off her hat. Aside from a certain rakish improbability in the hat's design, which looked like a soup-plate, Ellery could see nothing remarkable in it; and he blinked wearily at her. "Look at this!"

She lowered her head, and for a horrified instant Ellery thought she was praying. But then her long brisk fingers came up and parted the reddish hair about her left temple, and he saw a bump beneath the Titian strands that was the shape and size of a pigeon's egg.

"How on earth," he cried, sitting up straight, "did you acquire *that* awful thing?"

Miss Merrivel winced stoically as she patted her hair down and replaced the soup-plate.

"I don't know," she replied.

"You don't know!"

"It's not so bad now," said Miss Merrivel, crossing her long legs and lighting a cigarette. "The headache's almost gone. Cold applications—you know the technique? I sat up half the night trying to bring the swelling down. You should have seen it at one o'clock this morning!"

Ellery scratched his chin. "There's no error, I trust? I'm—er—not a physician, you know."

"What I need," snapped Miss Merrivel, "is a detective."

"Hmm! But how, Miss Merrivel, in mercy's name—"

The broad shoulders under the tweeds shrugged. "It's not important, Mr. Queen. I mean my being struck on the head. I'm a brawny wench, as you can see; and I haven't been a trained nurse for six years without gathering a choice assortment of scratches and bruises on my lily-



"I GOT UP TO INVESTIGATE. AND—THE DOOR SUDDENLY SWUNG SHUT."

white body. I once had a patient who took the greatest delight in kicking my shins." She sighed; a curious gleam came into her eye, and her lips compressed a fittle. "It's something else, you see. Something—funny."

A little silence swept over the Queens' living-room and out the window, and Ellery was annoyed to feel his skin crawling. There was something in the depths of Miss Merrivel's voice that suggested a hollow moaning out of a catacomb.

"Funny?" he repeated, reaching for the solace of his cigarette-case.

"Queer—prickly. You feel it in that house. I'm not a nervous woman, Mr. Queen; but I declare if I weren't ashamed of myself, I'd have quit my job weeks ago." Looking into her calm eyes, Ellery fancied it would go hard with any ordinary ghost who had the temerity to mix with her.

"You're not taking this circuitous method of informing me," he said lightly, "that the house in which you're currently employed is haunted?"

She sniffed. "Haunted! I don't believe in that nonsense, Mr. Queen. Besides, who ever heard of a ghost raising bumps on people's heads?"

"An excellent point."

"It's something different," continued Miss Merrivel thoughtfully. "I can't quite describe it. It's just as if something was going to happen, and you waited and waited without knowing where it was going to strike—or, for that matter, what it was going to be."

"Apparently the uncertainty has been removed," remarked Ellery dryly, glancing at the soup-plate. "Or do you mean that what you anticipated *wasn't* an assault on yourself?"

Miss Merrivel's calm eyes opened wide. "But Mr. Queen, no one has assaulted me! I mean—not intentionally. I just happened to get in the way."

"Of what?" asked Ellery wearily, closing his eyes.

"I don't know. That's the horrible part of it."

Ellery pressed his fingers delicately to his temples, groaning. "Now, now, Miss Merrivel, suppose we organize? I confess to a vast bewilderment. Just why are you here? Has a crime been committed?"

"Well, you see," cried Miss Merrivel with animation, "Mr. Kagiwa is such an odd little man, so helpless and everything. I do feel sorry for the poor old creature. And when they stole that fiendish little door-stop of his with the tangled-up animal on it—

well, it was enough to make anyone suspicious, don't you think?" She paused to dab her lips with a handkerchief that smelled robustly of disinfectant, smiling triumphantly as she did so, as if her extraordinary speech explained everything.

Ellery took off his *pince-nez* and very deliberately polished the lenses. Then he put the glasses back on his nose and said: "Did I understand you to say *door-stop*?"

"Certainly. You know, one of those thingumabobs you put on the floor to keep a door open."

"Yes, yes. Stolen, you say?"

"Well, it's gone. And it was there before they hit me on the head last night; I saw it myself, right by the study door, as innocent as you please. Nobody ever paid much attention to it, and—"

"Incredible," sighed Ellery. "A door-stop. Pretty taste in petit larceny, I must say! Er—animal? I believe you mentioned something about its being tangled up. I'm afraid I don't visualize the beast from your epithet, Miss Merrivel."

"Snaky sort of monster. They're all over the house. Dragons, I suppose you'd call them. Although I've never heard of anyone actually seeing them, except in delirium tremens."

"I begin," said Ellery with a reflective nod, "to see. This old gentleman, Kagiwa—I take it he's your present patient?"

"That's right," said Miss Merrivel brightly, nodding at this acute insight. "A chronic renal case. Dr. Sutter of Polyclinic took out one of Mr. Kagiwa's kidneys a couple of months ago, and the poor man is just convalescing. He's quite old, you see, and it's a marvel he's alive to tell the tale. Surgery was risky, but Dr. Sutter had to—"

"Spare the technical details, Miss Merrivel. I believe I understand. Of course, your uni-kidneyed convalescent is Japanese?"

"Yes. My first."

"You say that," remarked Ellery with a chuckle, "like a young female after her initial venture into maternity. Well, Miss Merrivel, your Japanese, your unstable door-stop and that bump on your charming noodle interest me hugely. If you'll be kind enough to wait, I'll throw some other clothes on and go a-questing with you."

IN Ellery's big car Miss Merrivel watched the city miles devoured, drew a long breath, and plunged into her narrative. She had been recommended by Dr. Sutter to nurse Mr. Jito Kagiwa, the aged Japanese gentleman, back to health on his Westchester estate. From the moment she had set foot in the



The ever-resourceful Mr. Queen reaches new heights of ingenuity in this thrilling mystery story.

by ELLERY QUEEN

A BUMP THE SIZE OF A
PIGEON'S EGG. "HOW ON
EARTH," HE CRIED, "DID
YOU ACQUIRE THAT?"



house—which from Miss Merrivel's description was a lovely old non-Nipponese place that rambled over several acres and at the rear projected on stone piles into the waters of the Sound—she had been oppressed by a most annoying and tantalizing feeling of apprehension. She could not put her finger on the source. It might have come from the manner in which the outwardly Colonial house was furnished: inside, it was like an Oriental museum, she said, full of queer alien furniture and pottery and pictures.

"It even smells foreign," she explained with a handsome frown. "That sticky-sweet smell—"

"The effluvium of sheer age?" murmured Ellery.

Miss Merrivel did not know. It might have been merely the *people*. Although the Lord Himself knew, she said piously, they were nice enough on the surface; all but Letitia Gallent. Mr. Kagiwa was an extremely wealthy importer of Oriental curios; he had lived in the United States for over forty years and was quite Americanized. So much so that he had actually married an American divorcee who had subsequently died, bequeathing her Oriental widower a host of fragrant memories, a big blond footballish son, and a vinegary and hard-bitten spinster sister. Bill, Mr. Kagiwa's stepson, who retained his dead mother's maiden name of Gallent, was very fond of his ancient little Oriental stepfather, and for the past several years, according to Miss Merrivel, had practically run the old Japanese's importing business for him.

THERE WERE MEN
IN THE BOAT, AND
APPARATUS....SOME
ONE SHOUTED.



ELLERY WAS NOT FOOLED. HIS GRIP TIGHTENED ON

As for Letitia Gallent, Bill's aunt, she made life miserable for everyone, openly bewailing the cruel fate which had thrown her on "the tender mercies of the heathen," as she expressed it, and treating her gentle benefactor with a contempt and sharp-tongued scorn which, said Miss Merrivel with a snap of her strong teeth, were "little short of scandalous."

"Heathen," said Ellery thoughtfully, sliding the car into the Pelham highway. "Perhaps that's it, Miss Merrivel. Alien atmospheres generally affect us disagreeably. By the way, was this door-stop valuable?" The theft of that commonplace object was irritatingly nibbling away at his brain-cells.

"Oh, no. Just a few dollars; I once heard Mr. Kagiwa say so." And Miss Merrivel brushed the door-stop aside with a healthy swoop of her arm and sailed into the more dramatic portion of her story, glowing with its reflected vitality and investing it with an aura of suspense and horror.

ON the previous night she had put her aged charge into his bed upstairs at the rear of the house, waited until he fell asleep, and then—her duties for the day over—had gone downstairs to the library, which adjoined the old gentleman's study, for a quiet hour of reading. She recalled how hushed the house had been, and how loudly the little Japanese clock had ticked away on the mantel over the fireplace. She had been busy with her patient since after dinner, and had no idea where the other members of the household were; she supposed they were sleeping, for it was past eleven o'clock. . . . Miss Merrivel's calm eyes were no longer calm; they reflected something unpleasant and yet exciting.





Illustrated by
WILLIAM REUSSWIG

THE AUTOMATIC. THE WINDOW WAS OPEN...INVITING TO A DESPERATE MAN.

"It was so cozy in there," she said in a low troubled voice. "And so still. I had the lamp over my left shoulder, and was reading 'White Woman'—all about a beautiful young nurse who went on a case and fell in love with the secretary of— Well, I was reading it," she went on quickly, with a faint flush, "and the house began to get creepy. Just—creepy. It shouldn't have, from the book. It's an awfully nice book, Mr. Queen. The clock went on ticking away, and I could hear the water splashing against the piles down at the rear of the house, and suddenly I began to shiver. I don't know why. I felt cold all over. I looked around, but there was nothing; the door to the study was open, but it was pitch-dark in there. I—I think I got to feeling a little silly. Me, hearing things!"

"Just what do you think you heard?" asked Ellery patiently. "I really don't know. I can't describe it. A slithering sound, like a—a—" She hesitated, and then burst out: "Oh, I know you'll laugh, Mr. Queen, but it was like a *snake*!"

Ellery did not laugh. Dragons danced on the macadam road. Then he sighed and said: "Or like a dragon, if you can imagine what a dragon would sound like; eh, Miss Merrivel? And where did this remarkable sound come from?"

"From Mr. Kagiwa's study. From the dark." Miss Merrivel's pink skin was paler now, and her eyes were luminous with half-glimpsed terrors. "I was annoyed with myself for imagining things, and I got up to investigate. And—and then the door of the study suddenly swung shut!"

"Oh," said Ellery in a vastly different tone. "And despite everything, you opened the door and investigated?"

"It was silly of me," breathed Miss Merrivel. "Foolhardy, really. There was danger there. But I've always been a fool, and I did open the door; and the moment I opened it and gawped like an idiot into the darkness, something hit me on the head. I really saw stars, Mr. Queen." She laughed, but it was a mirthless, desperate sort of laugh; and her eyes looked sidewise at him, as if for comfort.

"Nevertheless" murmured Ellery, "that was very brave, Miss Merrivel. And then?" They had swung into the Post Road and were heading north.

"I was unconscious for about an hour. When I came to, I was still lying on the threshold, half in the library,

half in the study. The study was still dark; nothing had changed. I put the light on in the study and looked around. It seemed the same, you know. All except the door-stop; that was gone, and I knew then why the door had swung shut so suddenly. Funny, isn't it? . . . I spent most of the rest of the night bringing the swelling down."

"Then you haven't told anyone else about last night?"

"Well, no." She screwed up her features and peered through the windshield with a puckered concentration. "I didn't know that I should. If there's anyone in that house who's—who's homicidally inclined, let him think I don't know what it's all about. Matter of fact, I don't." Ellery said nothing. "They all looked the same to me this morning," continued Miss Merrivel after a pause. "It's my morning off, you see, and I was able to come to town without exciting comment. Not that anyone would care! It's all very silly, isn't it, Mr. Queen?"

"Precisely why it enthalls me. We turn here, I believe?"

TWO things struck Mr. Ellery Queen as a maid with frightened eyes opened the door for them and ushered them into a lofty reception-hall. One was that this house was not like other houses in his experience, and the other that there was something queerly wrong in it. The first impression arose from the boldly Oriental character of the furnishings—a lush rug on the floor brilliant and soft with the vivid technique of the East, a mother-of-pearl-inlaid teak table, an overhead lamp that was a miniature pagoda, a profusion of exotic chrysanthemums, silk hangings embroidered with colored dragons. . . . The second thing that troubled

him arose perhaps from the scared pallor of the maid, or the penetrating aroma. A sticky-sweet odor, even as Miss Merrivel had described it, hung heavily in the air, cloying his senses and instantly making him wish for the open air.

"Miss Merrivel!" cried a man's voice, and Ellery turned quickly to find a tall young man with thin cheeks and intelligent eyes advancing upon them from a doorway which led, from what he could see beyond it, to the library Miss Merrivel had mentioned. He turned back to the young woman, and was astonished to see that her cheeks were a flaming crimson.

"GOOD morning, Mr. Cooper," she said with a catch of her breath. "I want you to meet Mr. Ellery Queen, a friend of mine. I happened to run into him—" They had cooked up a story between them to account for Ellery's visit, but it was destined never to be uttered.

"Yes, yes," said the young man excitedly, scarcely glancing at Ellery. He seized Miss Merrivel's hands. "Merry, where on earth is old Jito?"

"Mr. Kagiwa? Why, isn't he upstairs in his—"

"No, he isn't. He's gone!"

"Gone?" gasped the nurse, sinking into a chair. "Why, I put him to bed myself last night! When I looked into his room this morning, before I left the house, he was still sleeping."

"No, he wasn't. You only thought he was. He'd rigged up a crude dummy of sorts—I suppose it was he—and covered it with the bedclothes." Cooper paced up and down, worrying his fingernails. "I simply don't understand it."

"I beg your pardon," said Ellery mildly. "I have some experience in these matters." The tall young man stopped short, flinging him a startled glance. "I understand that your Mr. Kagiwa is an old man. He may have crossed the line. It's conceivable that he's playing a senile prank on all of you."

"Lord, no! He's keen as a whipplet. And the Japanese don't indulge in children's tomfoolery. There's something up; no question about it, Mr. Queen. . . . Queen!" Cooper glared at Ellery with sudden suspicion. "By George, I've heard that name before—"

"Mr. Queen," said Miss Merrivel in a damp voice, "is a detective."

"Of course! I remember now. You mean you—" The young man became very still as he looked at Miss Merrivel. Under his steady inspection she grew red again. "Merry, you know something!"

"The merest tittle," murmured Ellery. "She's told me what she knows, and it's just skimpy enough to whet my curiosity. Were you aware, Mr. Cooper, that Mr. Kagiwa's door-stop is missing?"

"Door-stop? . . . Oh, you mean that monstrosity he keeps in his study. It can't be. I saw it myself only last night—"

"Oh, it is!" wailed Miss Merrivel. "And—and somebody hit me over the head, Mr. C-Cooper, and t-took it."

The young man paled. "Why, Merry! I mean—that's perfectly barbarous! Are you hurt?"

"Oh, Mr. Cooper—"

"Now, now," said Ellery sternly, "let's not get maudlin. By the way, Mr. Cooper, just what factor do you represent in this bizarre equation? Miss Merrivel neglected to mention your name in her statement of the problem."

Miss Merrivel blushed again, positively glowing; and this time Ellery looked at her very sharply indeed. It occurred to him that Miss Merrivel had been reading a romance in which the beautiful young nurse fell in love with the secretary of her patient.

"I'm old Jito's secretary," said Cooper abstractedly. "Look here, old man: What has that confounded door-stop to do with Kagiwa's disappearance?"

"That," said Ellery, "is what I propose to find out." There was a little silence, and Miss Merrivel sent a liquidly pleading glance at Ellery, as if to beg him to keep her secret. "Is anything else missing?"

"I don't know what business it is of yours, young man," snapped a female from the library doorway, "but praise be, the heathen is gone, bag and baggage, and good riddance, I say! I always said that slinky yellow devil would come to no good."

"Miss Letitia Gallent, I believe?" sighed Ellery; and from the stiffening backbones and chilling faces of Miss Merrivel and Mr. Cooper, it was evident that such was the case.

"Stow it, Aunt Letty, for heaven's sake," said a man worriedly from behind her, and she swept her long skirts aside with a sniff that had something Airedale-ish about it. Bill Gallent was a giant with a red face, and bloodshot eyes in sacs. He looked as if he had not slept, and his clothes were rumpled and droopy. His aunt in the flesh was all that Miss Merrivel had characterized her, and more. Thin to the point of emaciation, she seemed composed of whalebone, tough rubber and acid—a tall she-devil of fifty with slightly mad eyes, dressed in the height of pre-war fashion. Ellery fully expected to find that her tongue was forked; but she shut her lips tightly, and with a cunning perversity, persisted in keeping quiet thenceforward, and glaring at him with a venomous intensity that made him uncomfortable inside.

"Baggage?" he said, after he had introduced himself and they had repaired to the library.

"Well, his suitcase is gone," said Gallent hoarsely, "and his clothes are missing—not all, but a suitcase, several suits, and plenty of haberdashery. I've questioned all the servants, and no one saw him leave the house. We've searched every nook and cranny in the house, and every foot of the grounds. He's just vanished into thin air. . . . Lord, what a mess! He must have gone crazy."

"Ducked out during the night?" Cooper passed his hand over his hair. "But he isn't crazy, Mr. Gallent; you know that. If he's gone, there was a thumping good reason for it."

"Have you looked for a note?" asked Ellery absently, glancing about. The heavy odor had followed them into the library, and it bathed the Oriental furnishings with a peculiar fittingness. The door to what he assumed was the missing Japanese's study was closed; he crossed the room and opened it. There was another door in the study; apparently it led to an extension of the main hall. Miss Merrivel's assailant of the night before, then, had probably entered the study through that door. But why had he stolen the door-stop?

"Of course," said Gallent; they had followed Ellery into the study and were watching him with puzzled absorption. "But there isn't any. He's left without a word."

Ellery nodded; he was kneeling on the thick Oriental rug a few feet behind the library door, scrutinizing a rectangular depression in the nap. Something heavy, about six inches wide and a foot long, had rested on that very spot for a long time; the nap was crushed to a uniform flatness as if from great and continuous pressure: the missing door-stop, obviously. He rose and lighted a cigarette and perched himself on the arm of a huge mahogany chair, carved tortuously in a lotus and dragon motif, and inlaid with mother-of-pearl.

"Don't you think," suggested Miss Merrivel timidly, "that we ought to telephone the police?"

"No hurry," said Ellery with a cheerful wave of his hand. "Let's sit down and talk things over. There's nothing criminal in a man's quitting his own castle without explanation—even, Miss Gallent, a heathen. I'm not even sure anything's wrong. The little yellow people are a subtle race, with thought-processes worlds removed from ours. This business of the pilfered door-stop, however, is provocative. Will some one please describe it to me?"

MISS MERRIVEL looked helpful; the others glanced at one another, however, with a sort of inert helplessness.

Then Bill Gallent hunched his thick shoulders and growled: "Now, look here, Queen, you're evading the issue." He looked worried and haggard, as if a secret maggot were nibbling at his conscience. "This is certainly a matter for old Jito's attorney, if not for the police. I must call—"

"You must follow the dictates of your own conscience, of course," said Ellery gently; "but if you will take my advice, some one will describe the door-stop for my edification."

"I can tell you exactly," said young Cooper, brushing his thin hair back again with his white, musician's fingers, "because I've handled the thing a number of times, (Please turn to page 80)

Next Month

"The Satan from Grand Rapids"

The story of one of the most amazing crimes in modern history

by

Milton MacKaye

Who prepared, and edited "Under Secret Order," by Melvin Purvis

THE SAME LOOK WAS ON HIS
FACE AS ON JIM'S WHEN HE
SAID: "YOU DON'T WANT ONLY
PART OF A MAN, DO YOU?"

Illustrated by
JOHN FULTON

55



Don't Telegraph—Write!

A short-short story.

by ALEC RACKOWE

DEAR Miss Faile:

My Jim says I'm so loyal to the Company I don't approve of using anything but the wires. Maybe that's so. There's no one for me to write to, because I've only Jim, and he's never been away from me since he came back from France. What I've got to tell you, though, is best said in a letter.

You don't know me. I don't know you either, but until this afternoon—until a few minutes ago—I had a queer idea of you.

Maybe I'm getting narrow-minded with the gray hairs. Maybe I'm like all women who have men they don't ever want to change: intolerant. Jim says I am, but he laughs when he says it—so I suppose he doesn't mean it.

As a rule I don't pay any attention to the messages that come in over the teletype. It's like being in a candy-shop, I guess. You lose interest in the stuff. Usually I just paste up the strips and send out the messages and that's all there is to it.

That's the way it was with the ones that began to go back and forth between you and Donald Meredith. Yours bright and eager, and his pretty cold and offhand. It was after the first three that I said to Jim: "Some girls don't seem to know when a man is finished with them."

"Sure," Jim said. "It's a job giving a woman the air. Haven't I tried hard enough with you? But you won't even take the hint."

Once upon a time I wouldn't have liked that, even knowing he was joking, but it doesn't bother me any more. I'm sure of him now—he's all mine.

He's ever so handsome, my Jim is; he has always been. When he went away to war, I was scared silly I'd lose him. I guess he

loved me all right, but we were young, and Jim was so popular. I was proud of him, and at the same time scared. But after he came back, it was different. He needed me then. I could tell that the minute I saw him. I've never worried about losing him since. . . .

Your messages were coming in. Welcoming Donald Meredith back from England. Asking why he hadn't written. Should you come down and see him, or was he coming up to see you? And his answers, avoiding saying anything. I began to think you were a pretty stupid sort of girl not to recognize the run-around, and that Donald Meredith was a playboy winding up an episode.

It's funny the picture I had of you. A probably halfway good-looking girl without much brain and sort of dizzy. Yet after he'd been in the office today, I got a different picture of you. An actual picture, even though I haven't ever seen you.

Your last message came early this morning and I sent it out by Harry, one of the day boys. The one that said: "WHAT IS WRONG STOP HAVE TRIED TO REACH YOU BY PHONE WITHOUT SUCCESS STOP PLEASE WRITE ME."

I said to myself: "My sakes, some women are silly. Here he's as good as been telling her to please forget all about him, and she hasn't even begun to realize it."

I was waiting for one o'clock, when I get off and go over to the factory where Jim is assistant to the superintendent, to have lunch with him. There was an hour yet to wait. The key had just tapped out the Arlington time signals. There wasn't anybody in the office but me. The street was quiet, the way it always is in our small town—just a blaze of sunlight (Please turn to page 117)



Triangle

ONE autumn evening several years ago, Cassaday and I sat by the fire in his library, where the books run rather more to poetry and philosophy than one would expect to find on the shelves of a great trial lawyer. We were debating whether Wordsworth or Frost was the noblest bard of country life in English letters. I was for Wordsworth; he for Frost.

While we talked, a lad of ten came in to say good-night. When introduced, he shook hands gravely with me, and then kissed Cassaday without a trace of that embarrassment which usually spices a boy's exhibition of affection before a stranger. I scanned the lad carefully, noting particularly his sinewy slenderness, lean jaw, frank gray eyes and curly brown hair, his all-round thoroughbred look.

After he excused himself, Cassaday said: "Quite a boy. He and Frost came to me out of the same adventure, if one can call such a searing, deadly experience an adventure. Perhaps I see more in the boy than can possibly be there, just as I read into Frost more than possibly can be there. I bring to my study of both of them overtones and undertones of my own."

Cassaday ran his fingers through his graying hair; then suddenly he said: "I'll tell you the story."

Then I heard this:

Twenty years ago when Cassaday was a young lawyer waiting for clients, he used his leisure to read all manner of things. Almost the only cases that came his way weren't legal cases at all, but investigations for a detective agency. We hadn't gone to war then, but were shipping munitions. The agency built a broad organization to guard important plants against enemy agents. Cassaday handled some work in the Albany district; those fees were about the only ones he could count on.

One day he was sitting at his desk about noon reading Beal's translation of "The Life of Buddha." The telephone bell rang. It was the chief of the detective agency in New York.

"Don't ask me questions," the latter said, in that crisp voice of his. "No time. Take down what I say: You're to go to Troy, and find a man and a woman who intend to commit suicide by jumping off the bridge there in an hour and a half—at one-thirty. Woman, twenty-eight years old, small, slight, dark—writes. Man, thirty, tall, thin, gray eyes, brown hair, well-dressed, rich—engineer type. Don't know where you'll find them. They telephoned from a coal-office to say good-by to my client, her husband. He asked them to wait until they received a message from him, and they agreed—until one-thirty. You may locate them through a telegraph-office—if they wait. You're to deliver the message. He wants them to hold off until he can get there to say good-by to them in person. Tell them their telephone conversation was satisfactory, but not enough. He says he has thought it all out, and doesn't intend to stop them. He may change his mind about that. I think they're all crazy. Your job ends when he arrives. If you can find and hold them until then, there's a good fee in it for you. Remember, this isn't a police case. Get going."

As Cassaday drove over the Hudson River bridge at Troy about one o'clock, he noticed, as he

Squared by ARTHUR POUND

Two men and a woman, borne by their own emotions to the brink of extinction.

told me, how low the railing was, and how black the waters. The excitement of the chase yielded then to a sense of horror. Cassaday decided to save them if he could.

Sure enough, there was a coal-office near the bridge-head. The woman in charge replied to his breathless question: Yes, a couple had been there telephoning to New York. . . . Queer for them to come here. Cassaday thought, when the hotel was just across the street; perhaps they wanted more privacy. Both the man and woman acted strangely, the woman said. Her phrase was, "Nervous as lost cats." No, she hadn't listened to the conversation particularly, but she couldn't help hearing a little. It seemed to her there must have been a death in the family; still, she couldn't quite tell. Yes, something was said about waiting for a telegram. The telegraph-office was just down the street.

It was a small branch office, with a girl at the counter. Cassaday started to write messages, chiefly to kill time and talk to her. Had she seen this couple—woman in her late twenties, dark; man about thirty? Perhaps a little nervous—death in the family or something.

Yes, the telegraph-girl had seen them. Yes, they were expecting a telegram and would be back. They had called several times already.

They might come in again any minute. She was sure they would return—it seemed to be a matter of life or death. She said: "They seemed bewitched." Cassaday wrote out a telegram to the chief: One word—"Found."

Presently the girl whispered to him: "They're coming in the door now. Don't look around."

To plan a line of action, Cassaday wrote two more telegrams—one to his office; one to his wife, saying not to expect him until he appeared. Then he shoved a five-dollar bill into the girl's hand, whispered "No change, please," and backed away from the counter.

The Man stepped forward and asked in level tones if a message had been received. As Cassaday passed the Woman, he saw that she was pale but cool as ice. At the door he paused irresolutely. The Man rather hastily asked the girl if she was sure there was no mistake; the woman said: "That's very strange. He is always so prompt."

From the door Cassaday said hurriedly: "Excuse me, please. The message you are expecting has been delivered to me. If you will please step outside, I will give it to you."

The two of them looked him up and down, the Woman with just a touch of fear in her eyes, the Man with haughty indifference.

"I assure you," Cassaday went on, "that I have never been as uncomfortable, as lost for the right word, as I am at this moment. This meeting is the result of a most unusual chain of circumstances, and no fault of the young lady at the desk. I have come by this message honorably, as you will understand immediately if you will let me deliver it to you under the proper conditions. Please!" And he held the door open.

There was nothing else for them to do but follow him outdoors. He knew instinctively that the Woman was the one to talk to. Why? Oh, well, the woman is the emotional spring in all cases. My friend knew that; and knowing it, he knew he had to find some way to touch that emotional spring—perhaps through her sympathy.

"First of all," he said, "please have no fear that I am a police officer. I am a lawyer, pulled suddenly from an empty office to deliver a startling message to two persons I had never seen and might never find. So far, luck has been with me. Believe me when I say this is the strangest assignment ever given me, and that scoring at least a reasonable success in it means everything to me just now. I am having the usual difficulties establishing myself in my profession. Beyond that, I am intrigued by the perils and mysteries of this situation. As best I can, I try to study and understand the vexations of the human spirit, from which I have suffered as well as you. I have been struggling along, not knowing how I would live from one month to the next, sometimes scarcely caring

whether I lived or died, and suddenly I get this opening. I know you will help me."

"YOU SAY MY JOB IS ENDED. BUT I'M A LAWYER, PLEDGED TO PREVENT CRIME."





Illustrated by JEROME ROZEN

"Come to the point," growled the Man. "We don't care who you are. What's the message?"

"Wait," said the Woman.

"Yes," my friend hurried on. "The key-word of the message is 'Wait.' But first let me say that although I could restrain you by force from doing what you intend, I shall not do so. My instructions are that this is no police case. If it becomes a police case, I fail. I might be willing to fail in order to save you; but it will not be necessary for me to fail."

He looked at his watch. "It is not quite half-past one." As soon as you have heard the message in full, you can go your way, providing you can forget the plea it contains. The message is this: 'Please wait until I can arrive to say good-by. I have no intention of interfering or delaying you beyond that point, but please, for the great love I bear you both, wait that long.'"

"Nonsense," said the Man briefly. "Come along." He took the Woman's arm.

"The message was for the lady," Cassaday declared, catching desperately at straws. "Since you both have heard it, the subject is open for discussion. Yet we can't discuss it here in the street. Perhaps you're hungry. I'm desperately hungry. Please cross with me to the hotel and do me the honor of lunching with me. After all, your husband isn't asking a great deal when you consider his rights and his sacrificing attitude through this whole tragic affair. He has known the worst for a long time, and now he is reconciled to your going. He asks merely the opportunity to see you once more. It means so much to him—and to me."

The Woman shrugged her shoulders; her pale face was framed in a black fur into which she bent her head—a listening pose.

Cassaday tried another opening: "If either of you believes at all in fate, count my being here and finding you so swiftly as the act of fate. Something led me to you, straight as the well-aimed arrow seeks its mark. The trap of time has been held ajar for you a little while at least. It is now five minutes after half-past one. You had a rendezvous for one certain, definite moment; that moment has passed through no act of yours. It may have passed forever—if fate wills. There can be no harm in prolonging the respite. After all, we may never meet again."

As Cassaday led them across the street, he felt that he was guiding two of the already dead, into whose privacy he had intruded. The street was the Styx; Cassaday was Charon. They were oblivious to traffic, absorbed in themselves and in each other, dead to all the world save themselves.

That old hotel in Troy, still famous for good food, in those days was famous for good liquor also. Around the walls of the large dining-room are ranged rows of booths open on one side. As the room was empty, a booth gave almost the seclusion of a separate room. Cassaday had thought of a private dining-room, but this was safer; they were under the eyes of the waiters, but not within earshot of them.

The Woman would eat nothing. Her refusal disconcerted Cassaday, forced him to talk against time. That was his problem—to talk against time, since he had given them promises, but they had given him none. He drew on his youthful eloquence; he quoted the lustier, gustier poets in praise of food; misquoted Brillat-Savarin on wine-soaked mushrooms, and was coldly corrected

by the

Man.

The wrong

kind of wine.

A precisian;

well, who but a

precisian could have

made his fortune so

quickly, out of metals and

munitions? Cassaday could see

that the Man was one of those who take

tight hold of an idea or a property or a

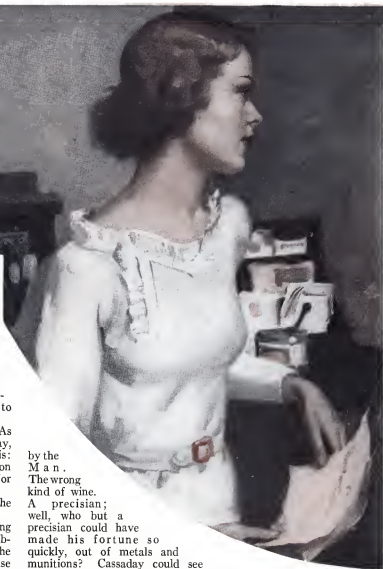
woman, and hang on, like a lean-jawed terrier. Still,

he was clay in this woman's hands—clay that had been burned and was now hard as a burned brick, ready to crack under the terrific pressure, but yet not cracking. The Man was under perfect control except for his hands—long, strong, brown hands which he kept rubbing together as if they were cold.

Cassaday was dismayed to find they would not eat. He had counted on that. There is something friendly, warming, disarming in the simple act of eating. When you eat, you quit being superior and are just a poor mortal, a babe sucking at the breasts of Mother Earth. To eat, is to acknowledge life, to answer the demands of life. For them to eat with Cassaday, would be to accept him, to admit that he had a place in their lives. Food would be a concession to life itself, a concession to him; they refused both concessions. No matter! Cassaday had killed ten minutes, and had caught just the edge of a smile on the Woman's lovely mouth when he spoke of truffles at Senlis. She would give life no further grip on her, but she could not deny the life she had already lived. That edge of a smile let Cassaday know there was a way to penetrate her tense soul, if only he could find it.

For himself he ordered largely, spinning around each order an eulogy on this or that speciality of this famous house. He lured the Man to order breast of pheasant after a long tale which involved the habits and instincts of that bird, then less frequently vended than it is today. The Man was, he admitted, a sportsman; and that led Cassaday on to flounder up and down the dim reaches of shooting lore, in the hope that the Man would be moved to contradict his absurdities, to argue, to bend, to forget his obsession. But there was no bending. Then it occurred to Cassaday suddenly that he was torturing these tense, suffering persons. What they needed was drink, since they would not eat.

When you eat, thought Cassaday, you accept life. When you drink, you escape life. Yes—oh, very well—an Irish whisky.





THE GIRL WHISPERED TO HIM: "THEY'RE COMING IN THE DOOR NOW. DON'T LOOK AROUND."

Cassaday seized the occasion to tell Irish stories,

having some direct from the Old Sod by way of his father. The Irish waiter who hovered over the table for the long-delayed order thought they were all fey.

The Man and the Woman drank their whisky neat, a glass at a time, without a grimace, as if it had been water. They were so far beyond the normal reactions of flesh and blood that liquor had no effect on them at all. My friend ordered the longest lunch he could, far more than he could eat, and worked through like a gourmet, lingering over each course and occasionally tilting a diluted glass of whisky. He talked and ate for two hours, while his guests silently drank, and smoked endless cigarettes, staring at their host or at each other, occasionally replying to a direct question, letting Cassaday's forced witticisms fall flat, enduring him as one endures a bore while waiting for a train.

Then after lunch they had more whisky and cigarettes, and more floundering talk from Cassaday, until his head was swimming. Out of the tail of his eye he could see the clock, recording each long, painful minute. Through his mind, as he talked wildly of this and that, moved this thought: "Now it's two against one, two pulling toward death, one toward life. A little while,—four hours, three hours, two hours—it will be two against two. Then we win."

At last the Woman began to talk.

"You mentioned Buddha," she said evenly. "He is most dear to me. Death, to him, was a going on, but a going on in complete emancipation from all that has happened here."

Cassaday clung to the theme, argued to pros and cons of translation. At length he and the Woman agreed on the general merits of the Noble Eight-fold Path, the Man sitting unmoved through the debate, except for his restless, rubbing hands. Then Cassaday took up the various sections of the Path. When he reached the fourth section, on conduct, the Woman sighed deeply and fell to discussing herself, the Man and her Husband.

The Woman said she had loved this man long ago as a boy—well, hardly more than a boy: eighteen. She loved him then and would always love him; she reached over and laid her slim hand on his. But she and her mother went to Europe to live, while he

went to college. There was money and position on her side, neither on his. He had his way to make, in a profession where a slow start is proverbial. He went to Peru for mining engineering, rarely wrote her, tried to put her out of his mind. Meantime she met her husband, a dear man, older than herself, eminently suitable, with money and family, favored by her mother. A tremendously able man, inflexible in getting his way. He gave her a long, hot pursuit; this Man—she stroked his hand—did not pursue her at all. So she married the other—the one who was on his way to Troy now, to say a last good-bye to them.

After they had been married five flawless years without regrets, the Man came back from Peru. He was then a person of importance. She saw by the papers that he had reached New York. For ten years they had not met. She wrote him a dozen notes and tore them up; he was on the point of telephoning her a hundred times, and something stopped him. Then, quite by accident, they met. Their old love flashed into fire at a glance. No longer were they boy and girl, bashful, afraid of themselves and of life. Their old love flashed into fire as hotly as ever, but now there were no dews of youth to restrain the fires. Still they fought against fate—

"You know what brought me over here. It was your mention of fate. Everything is fated. That was fate. This is fate. What is to be, is fate."

She drank more whisky and continued: "The details would only bore you. It all seems so silly now, the struggle we made against fate. We might have had each other that much longer—perhaps not; one never knows. Except for that delay, we might have come to this dead-end long ago. That might have been better; struggle is useless. At any rate, we reached a point where living has become worse than death can possibly be."

Cassaday could never have agreed to that, but he held his tongue. It was a blessed relief to have her talk, instead of having to talk himself. Her voice was like silver bells, her eyes like quiet pools of black water.

"What made the situation unbearable at the long last is that these two men of mine learned to like each other as well as two honest men can. Neither could work up any hate for the other, not even on account of me. My husband knew everything before I told him; then he was all kindness. We would go away and forget; we went away, but I could not forget. Then he said he would give us a divorce; but you"—she nodded at the Man—"wouldn't agree to that. You loved him too much to hurt him, to humble him in the midst of his great affairs. I love him too, more than most wives love their husbands. It became too horrible for us to bear. And now this waiting is more horrible still." She gripped the table-top; the Man was as bleak as a prison wall on which moved only two brown leaves in tight circles—his restless, rubbing hands.

"Nevertheless you will wait," Cassaday said, "because your husband has been so understanding through it all. That is all you can do for him now—to wait a little while. On the Eight-fold Path one must sometimes wait for the Fruit to fall."

The afternoon wore away. The host tried to keep the ball in the air, welcoming every little diversion which assisted him in holding their interest until the Husband, able and inflexible, should arrive to help him. He exploited the incessant hovering of the waiter who by this time was sure (Please turn to page 118)

ROMANCE, 1936

"THIS IS NOT FUNNY, TONI," PAUL BROKE IN, "I TOLD YOU I'D HAVE NO PART OF—"

"PERHAPS I don't make myself clear, Dad," Toni said patiently. "My intentions are honorable. I want to marry the boy."

Jeff Moulton's thin mouth became, if possible, a trifle more sardonic. Good-looking guy, Jeff, Toni thought, with deplorable lack of filial respect. That was the worst of the famous war generation, her irrelevant mind went on. They looked so darned approachable and—oh, contemporary; and then you found they didn't mean anything like the same things you did.

"I'd gathered that," her father assured her. "I expect you think you're being very romantic, eh? Wind-burned, barefoot son of the soil, and all that? Why you have to pick out the little freckle-faced brat who used to feed my pigs, eludes me."

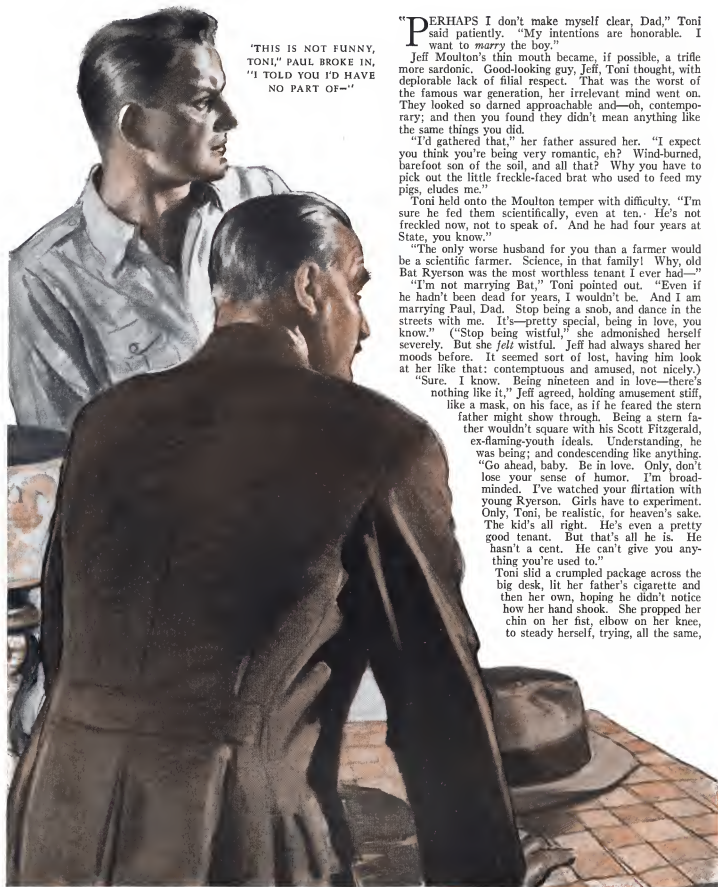
Toni held onto the Moulton temper with difficulty. "I'm sure he fed them scientifically, even at ten. He's not freckled now, not to speak of. And he had four years at State, you know."

"The only worse husband for you than a farmer would be a scientific farmer. Science, in that family! Why, old Bat Ryerson was the most worthless tenant I ever had—"

"I'm not marrying Bat," Toni pointed out. "Even if he hadn't been dead for years, I wouldn't be. And I am marrying Paul, Dad. Stop being a snob, and dance in the streets with me. It's—pretty special, being in love, you know." ("Stop being wistful," she admonished herself severely. But she *felt* wistful. Jeff had always shared her moods before. It seemed sort of lost, having him look at her like that: contemptuous and amused, not nicely.)

"Sure. I know. Being nineteen and in love—there's nothing like it," Jeff agreed, holding amusement stiff, like a mask, on his face, as if he feared the stern father might show through. Being a stern father wouldn't square with his Scott Fitzgerald, ex-flaming-youth ideals. Understanding, he was being; and condescending like anything. "Go ahead, baby. Be in love. Only, don't lose your sense of humor. I'm broad-minded. I've watched your flirtation with young Ryerson. Girls have to experiment. Only, Toni, be realistic, for heaven's sake. The kid's all right. He's even a pretty good tenant. But that's all he is. He hasn't a cent. He can't give you anything you're used to."

Toni slid a crumpled package across the big desk, lit her father's cigarette and then her own, hoping he didn't notice how her hand shook. She propped her chin on her fist, elbow on her knee, to steady herself, trying, all the same,



by NANCY BARNES

Illustrated by BRADSHAW CRANDELL

to look casual. Her father feared intensity, she knew. Gayety was the note to try for with him. But gayety was out now. This was important. Maybe if she put her mind to it, she could somehow get through to him.

"Paul hasn't much money," she admitted reasonably. "But he's got his seed in, and enough cash to make it until harvest. The Valley Farm's one of your best places. His third of the crop will keep us nicely next winter. But you know all that. He can give me something to work for, Dad—something to build. Most of all, he gives me what you've always given me: companionship; understanding—oh, and a lot of fun too. Laughing with a person's terribly important, don't you think? Well, we find the same things amusing, just the way you and I do—"

That was wrong, a mistake. Jeff's face got all funny when she said that. Where was her tact, Toni wondered miserably. You ought to remember to handle fathers exactly as you did other men. That was what came of trying to be honest; you got intense, and immediately were too honest.

Jeff pushed back his swivel-chair and stood up. "All right, darling," he said lightly. "Call yourselves engaged if it entertains you. Only, I wouldn't announce it. Your crowd might ride you plenty about your farmhand. Get engaged," he repeated, smiling at her amiably, "and then give yourself—and me—a break. Wait a year to be sure. And you can be in love without turning into a little hermit, you know. Get out and about the way you used to. Youth's a time for having fun. By the way, that new place Dick Marshall opened isn't half bad. I was there last night. The music's something to put life into even these old bones." He shrugged broad shoulders into his smart top-coat, and settled his felt hat at the angle best calculated to belie his reference to age, since his daughter, for once, wasn't reassuring him. "Where's Mike these days?" he asked. "I thought you two had been paired off on every party list for years. If you're set on a husband, I'll bet he'd jump at the chance."

It wasn't any use. She'd tried for sincerity and understanding, and he'd shut a door in her face—hidden behind flippancy, as he always did.



Being a pal to his daughter: that was Jeff's line. Being broad-minded. Broad—and shallow. . . . Anger began at Toni's toes and flamed upward like a blaze, blinding her. "Mike wouldn't be as eager as you think," she said carefully, watching his face. "Oh, he'd make an honest woman of me if you insisted; but warmed-over—ah—love is as bad as second-day roast, don't you feel?"

IN books people winched when a blow struck them. The phrase was true. Toni watched Jeff's face do that, and was glad. Maybe, now he'd grow up for her.

"You mean—" "I mean I've done my experimenting, Jeff. And I didn't like it. I'm not passing the buck, but after all, I did grow up on a pretty lush diet of left-over post-war clichés. Your generation was so darned afraid of being inhibited, of missing something, of being cheated by old-fashioned discipline—" It wasn't fun, any more, to watch his face. He stared at her, and still staring, sat down slowly. His hat, pushed back a bit, did not belong to his face now. It looked too young for him.

She slid off his desk and went to put an arm round his shoulders. "I'm sorry, darling. I meant not to worry you with that, ever. It's all over and no harm done. Honestly! Only—Paul and I want to be married. That other stuff's no good to us. We want discipline and something hard to do, something to believe—" She stopped and laughed a little. "Funny, isn't it?"

"Paul knows about Mike?" her father asked dully.

"Of course. 'He quite agrees that Mike is a nice guy, only dull: not the sort of person anyone would want to stay with forever.' Her father didn't seem to understand about that. He looked at her as if he were still waiting for her to answer his question. They weren't having much luck at making words mean the same thing today, Toni told herself ruefully. "But you do see, Dad, that I'd know, now, what I want?"

"I see that I've been a bad father to you," Jeff said heavily. "I've neglected you shamefully. If Gerda hadn't left me—" Toni felt embarrassed as anything. It wasn't like Jeff, talking that way; and she hated it for him. He got up and took her shoulders and kissed her solemnly on the forehead quite like a father in a movie. "I'll make up for it," he said. "We'll get out of this town—travel. I can't let you fall right out of one mistake and into another." He grinned at her, seeming to revive, now that he'd thought of something new to do. "We'll go to Paris, Toni. You'd like that. I'll show you—"

Toni shook his hands off her arms and got herself somehow to the door. She was suddenly so tired that it was quite a journey. "I'm marrying Paul next week, Dad. I thought that was what we were talking about, but it seems to have been a couple of other things." She tried to smile at him. "If you won't stand up with us at the courthouse, maybe you'll come out to the farm for fried chicken pretty soon."

"Paul won't be at the farm, Toni. He'll be leaving there this week."

Being the heavy father didn't become Jeff. Toni thought wearily. He hadn't the build for it. "You signed all sorts of fatal papers, darling," she said. "You can't just eject him—us."

Jeff didn't look at her. He looked out the window, seeming as tired as she felt. "Our contract stipulated that Paul raise sheep; twenty head apiece, we were to begin with. He found he couldn't afford it this year, and I was going to let him off. Now—now I won't, that's all. I'll go out tomorrow morning and tell him he's through."

"But, Dad, Paul can't get another farm this late! He's sunk most of his money anyway. He—why, it means he'll have to hunt a job—he'd be hired man again—start all over—"

"That's his problem. I'll not have a son-in-law who takes advantage of a wild impulsive girl—"

Toni went into the hall and closed the door gently behind her. It wasn't like her to go all symbolic, but it did seem as if she'd closed another and heavier door on a lot of things. . . .

The lost feeling stayed in the pit of her stomach until the moment she held her fist on the loudest car-horn in the county and watched Paul come loping round the chicken-house at Valley Farm. He said, "Hi, keed!" casually, like a gangster out of a story; but his big white teeth showed in the smile that always warmed her down to her toes, and his mouth wasn't casual when he kissed her. "Look. Eighteen!" he said proudly, and held out a bucket of eggs for her to admire.

She had to open the car door herself, surprising him. "I can make us a swell soufflé with three of them and the cheese I bought. Oh, and thank you so much, Mr. Ryerson; I'd love to stay for supper." When he said, "Well, is *this* something," and took her elbow possessively, she felt found again and safe, and a bit breathless too; which was silly.

It wasn't until they'd scraped their plates clean that she had to reach way down for her courage and yank it up from her boots. "You wouldn't rush me, would you?" she asked when he began pulling a coat over her overalls. "Where's all this old-time farm hospitality I been hearing about? And don't tell me you haven't a new tooth-brush, because I brought my own, just in case."

The room grew very quiet. Toni said, "My bag's in the car," into the silence. Paul stood with one arm in a coat-sleeve, staring at the floor. Then he got his coat on and shook his head as if he were trying to shake cobwebs out of it. "*Huh-uh!*" he said definitely. "Not a chance, Toni." He got her top-coat from the hook behind the door, and came to hold it for her. "You get the devil out of here like a good sweet girl," he said rather urgently. The look in his blue eyes, the way his hand shook a little as he held her coat out, silenced the sharp hurt words Toni wanted to say. She slid her arms into the sleeves, leaned back against him to see his face; then she turned, in his arms, and his kiss killed her last lingering doubt, and she stopped worrying about having thrown herself at him.

He released her as suddenly as he'd taken her, and when she raised her lips to him again, he said, "Go home, sweet. Fight fair, can't you!" so crossly that they both began laughing, and Toni knew her moment had passed.

SHE told him about the scene with her father, and argued with him over it, though without much hope—argued while he sat decorously across the table from her and refused to come closer. "Don't you see, Paul, that I've got to do it this way? I told Martha I was going to

stay all night with Mary Rose. Dad's coming out tomorrow to tell you you have to move. Well, if I'm—if it's too late and I belong to you, he can't do that to you."

But Paul refused to see it. "I'm not so keen about blackmail," he said. "And I'll not hold a gun on the biggest man in town and force him to let me marry into his family."

When Toni said, "But, Paul!" in a scared voice, he grinned reassuringly at her. "Oh, I'm not proud. I'll marry you, money and all, and think it's damned lucky you've got it. Lucky for you. Only, I won't be a part of any plot to hold the old boy up. I'll get a job; don't you worry. Straford Farms need a good man right now. We'll just have to wait some more, that's all."

"Wait! We waited while you finished school. We waited last year while you worked and got a stake. I'm sick of waiting. That's what Jeff said. Wait! He doesn't know the way things are now. He doesn't realize we've got to grab our chance at making a living while we can get it. If I was mixed up in some mess with you, he'd understand that. He wouldn't like it, but he'd understand it. Freedom, sex freedom, is exactly what his generation does understand. Economic freedom—the freedom to work together at a job we could do well, just wouldn't interest him—" But Paul shook his head stubbornly and doubts sprang up again to frighten her. "I could be wrong," she said then. "Maybe there isn't such a hurry after all. Maybe you don't want me."

He took her hands and held them hard, held her with eyes locked tight in hers. "*Want you!*" was all he said; but his voice broke as he said it, and he shook his head again in that bothered fashion new to her.

Toni let him button her coat, pulled her (*Please turn to page 65*)

In Our Next Issue



A
newly
discovered
story

by

O. HENRY

A Literary Event
of utmost importance!



Rub-a-dub-dub . . .
Three men . . . and one tub
Bon Ami is the answer

Bon Ami makes short work of cleaning up after "the men" of the family. First it cleans quickly—and *polishes at the same time*. Then it washes away easily . . . leaving your bathtub smooth and unscratched! You'll find Bon Ami not only protects the surface of your tub, but also helps you avoid drain trouble. For unlike coarse cleansers, Bon Ami leaves no gritty sediment behind to clog up pipes or drains. That's another reason why you'll like this "polishing cleanser." Try Bon Ami!

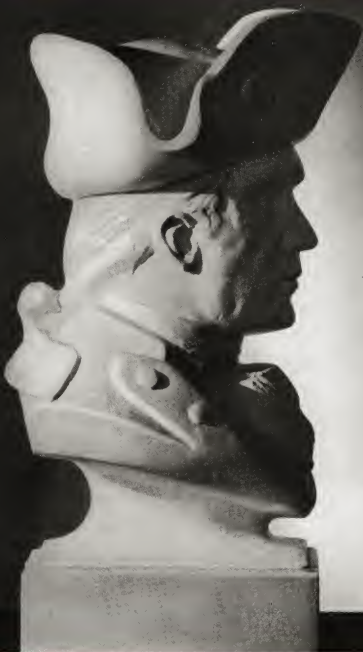
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Bon Ami
for bathtubs

"hasn't scratched yet!"



*CONFIDENCE... that the best
will always find favor*



TRUE, there are many worthy
whiskies today—but there's
only *one* Paul Jones!

Today, did we say? That has
been true for over 70 years!

Our family, from the beginning,
has steadfastly refused to depart
from the slow, old-fashioned
American method of distilling this
noble whiskey—confident that
men who *know* whiskey will always
cherish the forthright qualities for
which Paul Jones has been famed
for more than three generations.

Paul Jones is *all* whiskey—*every*
drop. And we believe its richer,
full-flavored mellowness will tell
you that you've found one of
America's truly *great* whiskies.



A GENTLEMAN'S WHISKY
SINCE 1865



Frankfort Distilleries, Inc., Louisville
& Baltimore, makers of Four Roses
(94 proof), Old Oyster Pepper (90
proof), Mattingly & Moore (90 proof)
—all blends of straight whiskies.

Paul Jones
A BLEND OF STRAIGHT WHISKIES
— 92 PROOF



hat down over one eye when he handed it to her, said, "Exit Potiphar's wife," and laughed at his protestations that he was no Joseph—as she ought to know—while he marched her to her car.

"And how did you intend seeing me home?" she asked, when he insisted on that. "Did you plan to ride herd on me from the rear, in your bus, or would you prefer walking the five miles back?" She kissed him lightly—lightly, she explained, because of his too-ardent temperament; and she drove off into the night before he had time to remember that he might have driven himself back in her car, if he'd taken her home.

WHEN you set a mental alarm that a certain sound is to wake you, sometimes it works. If it's important enough, it always works. That was why the rattle of Hattie Compton's milk-cans woke Toni so easily. A cot in the Valley Farm corn-crib just down the road from Paul's house, a scratchy car lap-robe for cover, and the dreadful certainty of rats for room-mates, are not conducive to sound sleep, anyway. Hustling herself into her negligee, shivering with nerves and the chill of the morning air, she slipped round the side of the corn-crib, made the corner of the house, and was able, without too much panting, to saunter into Hattie Compton's astounded vision as nonchalantly as if she'd rehearsed it—as indeed she had, twenty times before she slept.

An unmistakable roar that could only be the exhaust of her father's impressive roadster delivered her from having to answer more than six of Hattie's questions—saved her, too, from the more urgent inquiries that peered at her out of Hattie's probing eyes. She was being too lucky this morning, Toni told herself apprehensively as she took hasty leave of Hattie. She'd hardly dared hope Jeff would be so prompt.

She hurried across the road and slipped through the shrubbery of Paul's yard, then walked very softly up the back steps and into Paul's kitchen, got herself a dipper of water from the bucket on the drain-board, drinking it slowly, slowly, while she listened to the voices in the living-room. When she'd finished, her throat still felt dry, and she noticed, as if it did not belong to her, how her hand shook. "Relax, idiot," she scolded herself mutely. "Nobody ever won a game by going all tense and earnest." The trouble was, she admitted, it wasn't a game to her. She had behaved as if it were. She'd gayly staked a life—two lives—as if they

were a couple of white chips. Fear shook her, and she had to lean against the door, fighting to steady herself.

When she walked in upon them, she flattered herself that there was no trace of panic visible in her. She looked, she hoped, shameless and gay, in her trailing silk negligee. Her father and Paul both said, "*Toni!*" but Paul said it the louder. If anything he seemed angrier, too. Toni said, "Don't shout, darlings. You'll give Hattie even more to talk about," and wished her knees would stop shaking. She sat down rather suddenly, and that helped. She even leaned back and got a cigarette out of her pocket while they glared at her. She had, lighting it airily, the desolate conviction that she'd lost them both—lost them, that is, in any way that counted. They looked, both of them, as if they disliked her. Paul found his voice then: "Toni, you get dressed. Go home. I told you—"

Jeff interrupted him: "Of all the disgraceful exhibitions! Toni, you'll come home at once—"

Toni giggled, struggling with hysteria. "You're certainly unanimous, gentlemen. I'm afraid you're too late, though. You see, I've just told Hattie we were married yesterday. And you know Hattie! It'll be all over town by noon. That's what comes of being stingy, Jeff. If you'd set Paul up to a couple of cows, we might have kept our skeleton in the closet. Because I mean it's perfectly ridiculous for a farmer to have to buy milk." She stopped for breath, her lips feeling stiff as she smiled into their unresponsive faces. "And of course I don't suppose Hattie believed for a minute we are actually married; at least she still has her hopes! If you want to take me home and convince her—"

Jeff groaned. "I'll get you away on the first train. I'll take you abroad. I'll keep you there a year—"

"Oh, you shouldn't!" Toni disagreed. "That would look perfectly terrible, don't you think?"

"This is not funny, Toni," Paul broke in. "I told you I'd have no part in—"

"And heaven knows you had no part in anything. Jeff knows it too, darling. If ever we saw injured innocence, yours is it. It's all too obvious I slept in a corn-crib. I ran a whizzer on him, Jeff. Don't you think it was smart of me? But what's a girl to do? I ask you! The boy's chock full of stuffy old principles—much stuffer than yours." Toni watched her father's face closely, calculating every word, her heart in her throat. She watched while

a glimmer of amusement came into his dark eyes, twitched at his lips; watched the old admiration begin to show in his glance at her. This was something he understood; this was flaming youth; this was his spoiled wild young daughter getting her way—living dangerously, a chip off the old block.

"I hope your young man remembers that a woman should be struck regularly, like a gong," he said, grinning over her head at Paul. "I apologize for my daughter, Ryerson. You'll have your hands full. That is, if you intend to let her get away with this."

Paul's face, when she dared to look at him, made Toni want to cry. It glowed. Actually, it was as if some one had lit a candle behind it.

"I hardly see what we can do about it," he said, quietly enough; but then, at once, he was standing, and she was too, and with his arm around her. She hadn't imagined the candle effect either, because quite obviously Jeff had seen it too, and had been completely defeated by it. He shrugged, threw his hands out in a gesture of helplessness, but he didn't look helpless, or defeated either. Toni noticed. He looked, oddly, rather pleased. As though, for once, life was being as exciting as he liked it to be.

"If you'd take yourself a walk in the orchard, darling, I'd have breakfast for us in no time," Toni hinted; and Jeff gave her a look of such brilliant and amused understanding that she flushed with happiness as much as with embarrassment. It was fine, having Jeff back again, even if he could only share her lighter moments. She tried to explain about that to Paul, when he'd gone out.

"YOU see, he likes to think it's wild and irresponsible and reckless, being young," she said. "He—he admires me because he thinks I'm like that. Heavens, how disappointed he'd be if he knew what I'm really like." She pulled Paul's arm closer round her; and, her shoulder under his, they wandered to the window to watch Jeff's jaunty progress.

"I don't suppose there ever was a gal who wanted—so passionately—so many of the right things," Toni said, giggling. "I want security—and comradeship, and chickens, and a good crop this year, and children—and to live with you, all the days of my life—"

Paul put his face down against her throat. "Oh, my good Lord, Toni," he said, very low.

"Well, yes!" Toni agreed.

FREE WOMAN

(Continued from page 33)

readers, through her articles—there were already women in the world who swore by her.

As she had foreseen, it worked out very well for all concerned, and marvelously well for Harriet—when it did not, she spoke, and what she said carried increasing weight and power. She could have edited this magazine, become the editor-in-chief, and this in record time, if she had had no better thing to do. Since she was bent on quite another course, she stepped on no one's toes, she frightened no one—and since the menace that she

might have been was evident enough, this was appreciated in important ways.

She got everything she wanted, really, out of those two years: additional experience; new contacts; countless new ideas. Publicity—that above everything. Her self appearing in her manifold capacities in each fortnightly issue of the magazine. Her name writ large, reiterated unforgettably. Her picture in the framework of her column.

Three million women read these pages every fortnight—read or turned them. Three million women were incited edito-

rially to read what Harriet Lanforth had to say; to write to her; to send their questions to her, and their stamped, self-addressed envelopes; to ask her anything; to trust her absolutely, as a friend and an authority—a mere authority at first, when she began, and then a well-known authority, and then one of America's foremost authorities on women, and their interests, and their problems.

Here was advertising such as she could not have bought, and she was paid for it. She made an ample salary all the while.

She left in January, 1932, on schedule.

Now she was ready. Everything was ready. The fortune in the bank—intact, in spite of the depression. The tremendous plan perfected to the last and littled detail. The notebooks in which it was written—nine of them, in two and a half years. Her chosen advertising agency already hard at work on her account. The printers setting up the pamphlets that she would sell to women, and the lessons—thirty to a course—and all the questionnaires, and charts, and forms, and all the handsome letterheads. Her reputation made. Her reputation growing every minute, on the radio, and in the women's pages of the newspapers. Nothing to stop her. No power on earth to stop her.

That is to say, none that she could anticipate.

She took with her from the magazine the fashion expert and the household editor, at irresistible salaries. She gave them each ten shares of stock besides. She also took the business manager's famous secretary, for her own; and she brought along the circulation list, and all her own card-index files of the names and addresses, the circumstances and case histories, of all the countless women who had written in to her in those two years. She engaged spacious offices in a high worthy building on Fifth Avenue, and signed a long-term lease—she was as sure as that. She started in.

Hers was a unique service. There were authorities on charm, and on good manners, and on beauty, and on fashion; there were shopping counselors, and party experts, and love experts, and the rest; but Harriet was all things to all women. She had booklets covering fifty subjects, thoroughly, at fifty cents apiece. She had lessons that could teach you anything. She had solutions—ready-made or custom-made—for any problem you could bring her or send in to her by mail or telegraph. She had assistants and consultants; she had shoppers and designers; she had departments of all kinds; and her advisory staff beyond the confines of her offices included psycho-analysts, physicians, plastic surgeons, dermatologists—even an astrologist, and a handwriting expert, and a guide-and-escort service, and a singing-teacher, and a dancing-school.

The result you know. It has been told too many times to tell it again here. This is the other story, underlying it. This is what happened in the private life of Harriet at the same time. This is catastrophe, which no one knows.

IT began with Jon. This was two years ago, in 1934. Jon is now eight; he was then six—a sturdy, handsome little boy, with Harriet's eyes in Harriet's face, and with her coloring. There was nothing of his father there at all.

The superlative Miss Holliday had been imported to take charge of him, while the outgrown Miss Blodgett went the sobbing way of all her kind. Harriet had a new apartment, a cooperative one that she had bought in 1933, for a depression song, and thereupon had remodeled—among other things, she had installed an air-conditioning system, and a triple layer of sound-proofing between Jon's suite and hers. She now had fourteen rooms, all cool, all hushed. She had a string of offices even at home.

She believed in property; she knew no wiser thing to do with money in these

ticklish times than to buy durable material possessions of all kinds, at the prevailing bargain rates; and recently she had acquired two hundred and ten acres and a farmhouse in Connecticut, along the river. She was rebuilding that this year, for Jon to live in. She had already moved the house, and all but torn it down, and now it rose again, complete with many bathrooms, game-rooms, sleeping porches, a gymnasium, of course, a little swimming-pool in back, and a solarium and handball-court on the roof.

This was all for Jon, and it was like a playhouse on an adult scale, and he would love it, and it would be perfect for him. New York was not a proper place for growing children, Harriet remembered now.

A MOTHER asks:—

"My son, an only child, needs the discipline of group-living, the give and take of a large school community. Do you advise the military school for his college preparation?"

Many of the military schools offer excellent college preparation, plus the advantage of splendid physical discipline and character development. Choosing the school which will properly prepare a boy for college is a vital matter. You should be certain that the school you select meets the requirements in preparation for the chosen college.



Redbook's Educational Directory begins on Page 122. We know these schools through years of systematic visiting. If you do not find the type of school you are seeking, write directly to the Director of our Department of Education, Redbook Magazine, 230 Park Avenue, New York City. She will gladly assist you in selecting the most suitable school.

She was delighted with her new idea, and with its whole development—she saw a business value in it, in the end, and she brought out another booklet, full of pictures of the house, together with reproductions of the blueprints and the decorative schemes.

Her architect made money out of it, since he was credited. His name was Breckonridge, and it was he who had remodeled the apartment—he and Harriet, putting their heads together. In the beginning, she had thought somewhat of giving the apartment job to Whitney, because he needed it—he was hard hit by the depression, as she knew.

But so was Breckonridge, and she had easily decided upon him, because she liked him personally, and because, after all, she owed Whitney no favor. She had had a lot of trouble with him lately, over Jon.

When she began to plan the country house, she did not consider him at all, except in his capacity of interfering father.

She supposed he'd raise another row, when he was told about it—well, let him, she decided stonily. Let him maintain that Jon ought not to live out there alone, with just Miss Holliday. She, Harriet, would be ready for him. She had stood enough. She was fed up with Whitney's idiotic protests of her judgments, his sentimental notions, his incessant butting-in—and this time she would speak her mind, for once and all.

She was the mother of this child; she lived with him; she saw him daily, and she knew what was best for him as Whitney never would or could know it. She would say that, to start with. She would point out to Whitney also that she was the sole support of Jon, and that as such she had the right—the only right—to govern him. She would demand that right, now and hereafter. She need have no fear that Whitney would attempt a readjustment on that point, because he could not, any more. He had no money.

She would omit nothing of what she thought and felt. The present situation was impossible, and it was growing worse—she would tell Whitney so, and she would tell him why: His wife; his mother; all discipline relaxed when Jon was with them, all routine ignored, and this once every week, and for two full months in the summer. It was ruining the child. It was preposterous. No court on earth—The case was altered on the day of his remarriage; she had not agreed to share her child with any woman he might choose, nor so to jeopardize her child's whole character, and health, and future—

She would be ready, when the time came; and she was.

The interview took place at his apartment. Dottie did not happen to be present, which was just as well; the dowager Mrs. Bishop was, however, there. It all began quite pleasantly, with Mrs. Bishop serving tea, and Harriet explaining that she had called to tell them about a splendid new arrangement she had made for Jon.

She outlined it enthusiastically, lightly.

THAT was the end of amenity in that room. As she had anticipated, they opposed her—they were outraged. Mrs. Bishop said that she had never heard of such a thing, of such a heartless and inhuman thing; and Whitney said that he forbade it. Harriet grew angrier than she had ever meant to be, and more vituperative than she had planned—and more imaginative, finally. Her subconscious mind was cleverer than she.

It spoke for her. It answered Mrs. Bishop, who had just cried out insufferably: "Your son! Your child! Why do you keep saying that? He's as much Whitney's son as he is yours—"

"No, he is not!" said Harriet, and then she knew what to say next. "I'll tell you now," she said. Her voice grew quiet and distinct. Her eyes grew calm. "Jon is not Whitney's son at all," she said. "Whitney was not his father."

"What are you saying?"

"I'm telling you the truth—"

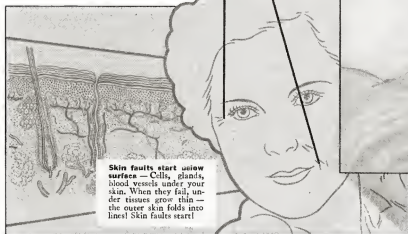
"You're lying!"

"I am not lying," said Harriet.

"Unfortunately," she thought of adding; and she added that.

She looked at Whitney, straight and steadily. "So now you know," she said.

LINE SAY "over 30!"



Miss Esther Brooks, much admired in New York this past winter, says: "Pond's Cold Cream takes every speck of dirt out of my pores, keeps my skin clear of blackheads."

A Sign that UNDER TISSUES are Shrinking!

THOSE mean little lines that creep in around your eyes, your mouth... You are only 25. But people see them—"She's every bit of thirty!"

Or, you are over thirty... but not a sign of a line. And everybody takes you for years younger than you are—"Not a day over 20!"

Do you know what those same little lines say to a dermatologist? He sees right through them to the under layers of your skin, and says: "It's the *under tissues* at fault!"

Keep away Blackheads, Blemishes —with Under Skin treatment

Skin faults are not always a matter of years. Look at the skin diagram above. Those hundreds of tiny cells, glands, fibres *under* your skin are what really make it clear and satiny—or full of faults! Once they fail, skin faults begin. But keep them active—you can, with Pond's rousing "deep-skin" treatment—and your skin blooms fresh, line-free, as in your teens.

Pond's Cold Cream contains specially processed oils which reach deep into the pores. It floats out all the dirt, make-up, skin secretions that are starting to clog. Already, your skin looks fresher!

More... You pat this perfectly bal-

anced cream briskly into your skin... Start the circulation pulsing, oil glands working freely.

Do this regularly—day after day. Before long, cloggings cease. Pores grow finer. Blackheads, blemishes go... And



Mrs. Eugene du Pont III

whose fresh, glowing skin just radiates youth and beauty, says: "Pond's Cold Cream freshens me up right away... It takes away that tired look and makes 'late-hour' lines fade completely."

those myriads of little fibres strengthen! Your skin grows firm *underneath*—smooth, line-free *outside*, where it shows.

Here's the simple Pond's way to win the clear, glowing skin that never tells of birthdays. Follow this treatment day and night.

Two things to remember

Every night, cleanse with Pond's Cold Cream. Watch it bring out all the dirt, make-up, secretions. Wipe it all off!... Now pat in more cream briskly. Rouse that failing underskin. Set it to work again—for that smooth, line-free skin you want.

Every morning, and during the day, repeat this treatment with Pond's Cold Cream. Your skin becomes softer, finer every time. Powder goes on beautifully.

Start in at once. The coupon below brings you a special 9-treatment tube of Pond's Cold Cream.

SPECIAL 9-TREATMENT TUBE and 3 other Pond's Beauty Aids

POND'S, Dept. M108, Clinton, Conn. Rush special tube of Pond's Cold Cream, enough for 9 treatments, with generous samples of 2 other Pond's Creams and 5 different shades of Pond's Face Powder. I enclose 10¢ to cover postage and packing.

Name

Street

City State

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"He's not your son. You have no slightest claim to him, and never have had."

She went away. She thought it over carefully thereafter; and it pleased her. She saw no danger in it, and she felt no dismay. Only relief. It would save her endless bother in the future—might have saved her endless bother in the past, if she had realized it. Now Jon was wholly hers, and hers for life; and this was right. This was an end that more than justified the means.

There was a week of this complacency; then, on a certain Monday morning, Harriet rode desperately from her office to Whitney's office, in one of those creeping taxis that await one's greatest haste. She had the lawyer's letter with her, in her hand; not even in her handbag. She read it half a dozen more times on the way. She arrived, and was forthwith admitted—Whitney had no clients to delay her in the anteroom; and she said instantly: "What does this *mean*, Whitney? You *can't* do this to me!"

She was still carrying the letter, and she flung it on his desk and pointed at it. Her finger did not tremble, though it might have; she had never been so frightened in her life. She said again, in a high voice: "What does that *mean*? I don't understand it. I told you Jon was not your child—"

"And I can prove he is," said Whitney evenly. "And I intend to. That's what the letter means—as I'm sure you understand very well."

"How? How can you prove it? If it's your word against my word in a court of law—"

"It's rather more than that."

"What do you mean?"

"I had some blood-tests taken."

Harriet sat down then, suddenly. "You did!" she said.

"You should have thought of that," said Whitney. "You who think of everything."

"When did you do that?"

"Several days ago. Tuesday or Wednesday." He looked at her, and added: "And the incomparable Miss Holliday is not to blame, if that's what's in your mind. I took him out of kindergarten. You had neglected to acquaint them with the news that I was not his father, and so they let me borrow him for an hour or so."

"He didn't tell me anything about it," said Whitney blankly.

"Possibly he hasn't seen you in the interim."

She did not even hear that. "All right," she said, having arrived at an abrupt decision. "All right. You win. Of course I lied. You knew it at the time—you said it—and I knew you knew it. I would have come to you and admitted it, as soon as I got over being angry. You didn't have to have a lawyer threaten me."

Whitney said nothing.

"Did you?" Harriet said reasonably. "Wasn't that rather drastic of you? You and I could have straightened it out, without that."

He was still looking at her thoughtfully. He said: "The conciliatory attitude sits oddly on you, Harriet."

"Well, I'm in the wrong," Harriet said. "Why shouldn't I be conciliatory? I'm entirely in the wrong, and I admit it, and I'm sorry—and now I want to know what you want me to do about it, Whitney. Do

you want me to sign something, right here and now? Some statement to the effect that I was lying? Because I'm quite willing."

"I dare say," said Whitney dryly. "I'm sorry, Harriet; it isn't as easy as that."

She had known it wouldn't be, when she first saw his face. She said: "You mean you're really going *ahead* with this thing? You're going to drag me into *court* about it?"

"I mean exactly that."

"But that's *insane*!" Harriet cried out passionately. "For what? What will you gain by that? What would be the point of it, after all? You're his father, and I've said so, and I've said I'm sorry I lied. What more is there to say, in court or anywhere else?"

"There's a great deal more."

"But will any of it prove anything that isn't already proved? What are you trying to *do*, Whitney? What is it you *want*?"

"You always expect to get off scot-free, don't you?" Whitney said. "And you usually manage it. Well, this time you're not going to."

"I wouldn't have *believed* you could be so vindictive!"

"And I wouldn't have believed you could deserve it as you do."

"I thought so!" Harriet said, and her eyes narrowed savagely. "That's all this is! That's all you want, isn't it? To punish me! To crucify me!"

"No," Whitney said. "That isn't all. I want the custody of Jon. I don't think you're a fit guardian for him, and I think I can prove it."

"AND do you know what 'proving' it will involve?" Harriet almost shouted.

"Have you the faintest conception of what it is you're proposing to do to me? And to *Jon*? I don't believe you have! I can't believe you'd be so ruthless! In the first place, it would ruin my business—absolutely and irreparably! It would smash everything I've built up in all these years! You understand that, don't you? You know that! You know how women are, and you know what the newspapers would do to me—I can't afford a scandal, for one single minute, and you know it damned well!"

"And in the second place?"

"And in the second place," said Harriet, not realizing what she said, "—there's Jon. Just to revenge yourself on me, you're going to drag *him* through a thing like that! To establish the legitimacy of his son, your lawyer's letter said—well, who in the world doubts his legitimacy, as things are now? Nobody! Not even you! But if you drag it into court, you'll suggest a doubt, and there'll always be a doubt—'No smoke without some fire,' and all the rest of it. Why, it'll follow him all his life, Whitney! He'll never live it down—"

"Are you really thinking about him?"

"Of course I am!"

"I doubt it," Whitney said. "Don't you mean that you yourself will never live it down?"

"I mean that neither of us will! I mean that I should think you'd have some mercy on Jon, if you haven't any on me!"

"You had very little to either of us," Whitney reminded her.

There was an hour of it. She could get nowhere with him. She could do nothing against his malevolence and wrath. She

could not even bribe him with the gift of Jon, although she tried—since she would surely lose Jon anyway in court proceedings such as these, she might as well try, and she did try. She said: "Look. Listen a minute, Whitney. You can *have* the custody of Jon—if that will settle it. If you'll withdraw this suit."

But he would not.

In the end she rose and strode across his office to the threshold, where she stopped and spoke once more, turning to face him.

"You won't reconsider?"

"No."

Harriet stared at him in silence. "By God, you will," she thought. But she said nothing now. She wheeled and left him.

She went back to her own office, and to her delayed appointments, and to all the waiting women who would have her tell them how to run their lives. She told them, all that day, as if it had been any day. She worked till eight o'clock that evening. Then she went home, and ordered dinner on a tray, and ate a little of it. She locked herself into her work-room after that, and walked the floor. Money, she thought. Money, she kept thinking. Whitney would have his price, like other people, now his need was great—but how high would it be, and how would she know what it was, and how would she get it, and how would she offer it indirectly—and yet on her terms?

There was an answer in her mind, as there had been since afternoon. She did not like it, but it was an answer, and the only one that came. She had a very rich admirer named Edmund Crendleton—the richest man she knew—one of the quietly immensely rich men of the town. He was fiftyish; he was a widower; and for the past two years and more, his strange harsh dream in life had been to marry Harriet. He was an adversary; he had always been a fighter, and he liked the people worthy of his steel—the tough, triumphant people, the hard and ruthless ones.

He had proposed to Harriet two years ago, and twice since then. The offer stood. He had recited it as if he read a business document: The financial settlements, the property, the houses, the monstrous mausoleum of a country house that he had taken her to see one day last year—that he would deed to her, with others elsewhere. She kept remembering that, not for itself, but for the memory of its size—that was the scale on which he built, when he built houses.

That would do it.

SHE married Edmund Crendleton, in February, 1934. He built a house for her—another house, which everyone said was too ridiculous, in view of all the houses he already had. Everyone said to Harriet: "What in the world will you do with it? You won't live in it, will you? Way out there? I can't see you commuting!"

"It will be nice for week-ends," Harriet said.

It was palatial. It was a million-dollar castle on the Sound, and everybody thought it was so kind of Harriet—yes, and of What's-His-Name, the new husband—to have engaged her former husband as the architect.

Of course it was the making of him. It was the making of his fortune and his rep-

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Here's the Guarantee 'THAT WON'T EVAPORATE'

FIND YOUR CAR ON THIS CHART

IMPORTANT! The price per gallon of an anti-freeze means nothing unless you know how many gallons you will need during the entire winter. You can't get that information on a boil-away anti-freeze. But you can get it for Eveready Prestone... and here it is. See how reasonably you can get two-way protection all winter long against both freeze-up and rust with one shot of Eveready Prestone—one shot because it won't boil off, no matter how warm the weather gets between the cold snaps. If your car isn't on this chart, your dealer has a chart showing all cars; and amounts needed for temperatures to 60° below zero.

Find your car and read from left to right. The first figure shows the protection you get with one gallon of Eveready Prestone in the cooling system; the second with one and a half gallons—and so on. "+" means above zero, "-" means below zero. If your car has a hot water heater, add 1/4 gallon to the quantity called for.

MODEL	1 gal.	1 1/2 gal.	2 gal.
Auburn	+12 - 4 - 27 - 50	+15 - 2 - 16 - 42	+17 - 0 - 9 - 36
6-52, '34, 6-53, '35; 6-54, '36			
8-205, '32; 8-140, 8-105, '33			
826, '34; 831, '35; 827, '34			
Buick	+6 - 18 - 54	+10 - 6 - 14 - 42	+12 - 4 - 27 - 50
40, '34, '35, '36			
40, '32, 36, '33, '34, '35			
80, 90, 95, '34			
80, '32, 90, '34, '35, '36			
80, 90, '32, 90, '34, '35			
Cadillac	+14 0 - 31 - 50	+16 + 4 - 12 - 34	+19 + 0 - 3 - 10
370-52, '34, '35			
355-D, '34, '35; 80, 45, '36			
453-D, '34, '35; 90, '34			
370-A, '31, 355-V, '32, 355-C, '33			
40, '70, '75, '36			
Chrysler	+12 - 62	+9 - 47	+9 - 14 - 42
Standard, '33, '34, '35			
Master, '32, '34, '35			
'31, '32			
All Models—'34	+8 - 12 - 43	+12 - 4 - 27 - 50	+15 + 2 - 10 - 7
6-732, '33, '34, '35			
6-731, '32, 8-7, Imp. '35; 6-736			
Imp. & Imp. & '33; 8-6, '35			
'70, '31; Delco, 6, '36			
De Soto	+10 - 8 - 34 - 62	+10 - 8 - 34 - 62	+12 - 4 - 27 - 50
6, '31, '32, '33, 6, '31			
6, '34, Airflow & Airstream, '36			
Airflow, Airstream, '35			
Design	+6 - 12 - 43	+12 - 4 - 27 - 50	+15 + 2 - 10 - 7
6, '31, '32, '34, '35			
Senior & '30, '31, '32			
6-732, '33			
Ford	0 - 34 - 62	+10 - 8 - 34 - 62	+12 - 4 - 27 - 50
6, '30, '31; 8, '32, '33			
'34, '32, '33, '34, '35			
'34, '35			
Graham	+10 - 8 - 34 - 62	+10 - 8 - 34 - 62	+12 - 4 - 27 - 50
80, 80, 110, '36			
75-90, 6, '24-8, '33			
74, 6, '32, 80, '34			
6, 8, '33, 6, 8, '34, '35, '35			
Holston	+3 - 25 - 62	+6 - 18 - 54	+10 - 6 - 14 - 42
6, '34			
6, '32, '33, '34, '35			
8, '35, '36			
8, '34			
Hopewell	+10 - 8 - 34 - 62	+10 - 8 - 34 - 62	+12 - 4 - 27 - 50
10, '31, Cent. & '32, '33, '33			
427, 421, '34, '35, '35			
332, '32, 423, '34; 518, '35;			
6-410-C, '34			
336, '34, 438, '34; 527, '35;			
6-410-B, '34			
6-410-B, '34			

NATIONAL CARBON COMPANY, INC.
specifically

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that Eveready Prestone, if used according to printed directions, in normal water cooling systems, will protect the cooling system of your car against freezing and clogging from rust formations for a whole winter; also that it will not boil away, will not cause damage to car finish, or to the metal or rubber parts of the cooling system, and that it will not leak out of a cooling system tight enough to hold water.

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Don't be confused by a name

Many brands of anti-freeze are being marketed under various names. Most of them are based on alcohol, and because they are not plainly labeled, it is easy to become confused. So before you buy any anti-freeze, just ask your dealer how much alcohol it contains. For alcohol—no matter how it is treated or what it is called—is subject to evaporation, leaving you without protection.

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A GALLON

Won't boil off... contains no alcohol



utation, anyway. It broke his health down, before he was through; and he is still recuperating somewhere in the West. Harriet's little boy, who lived with him—with Bishop—for quite a while after she married Edmund Crenleton, is back with her again. That is to say, he is back in Connecticut.

She seems entirely happy in this new marriage. Her friends agree that Harriet is always unpredictable. Who would have thought she'd ever marry anyone again—she who had always sworn she never would—and when she did, who would have dreamed it would turn out so well? But after all, when all is said and done, things always turn out well for Harriet. That is another point on which her friends agree.

They are deceived. Harriet herself could tell them that, although she never will. She hates this marriage, and she hates this man. He is a martinet. He is a match for her. He has allowed her to go on in business,—he admires her in her business rôle,—but he has been unyielding in many other matters. He expects certain things of her; he exacts certain obligations. She is required to live as he prefers to live. She keeps his hours. She entertains his friends and relatives and satellites—and they are numerous; she dines and wines his business contacts, to whom she is Mrs. Crenleton. She must take her vacations with him, at the times and in the places he designates. He chooses all the servants now. He makes the rules—she must abide

by them. He even tells her how to wear her hair. She wears it that way.

She cannot get away from him. She cannot think of any way of freeing herself from him that would not damage her professionally—that would not harm her business. She cannot divorce him, since there is no blame she can attach to him which would excuse her publicly. She does not even dare to leave him—knowing him so well. She remembers always that he is a fighter.

This is how it is. She hates him, and she hates her life. She feels that he has ruined everything for her. For all her vast success, she is not happy in the least.

This is in case it pleases you to know
THE END.

DARLING OF DESTINY

(Continued from page 41)

surrounded by slave States. This advance, Southern advocates termed the invasion and pollution of the sacred soil of Virginia, a Northern aggression more infamous than the Southern attack on Fort Sumter.

While a Michigan regiment marched toward the rear of Alexandria, Ellsworth's Fire Zouaves were to sail on transports down to that town of ten thousand and capture it. Ellsworth sat in his tent drenched in melancholy, writing to his father and mother that he expected the entrance to Alexandria would be "hotly contested," as a large force of the enemy had arrived there that day. "*Whatever may happen, cherish the consolation that I was engaged in the performance of a sacred duty. . . . My darling and ever-loved parents, good-by.*"

To Carrie Spafford, his betrothed at Rockford, Illinois, his "own darling Kitty," he wrote that if anything should happen, "*Just accept this assurance, the only thing I can leave you—the highest happiness I looked for on earth was a union with you. . . . I love you with all the ardor I am capable of. . . . God bless you. Again good-by.*" His favorite officer, Captain John Wilsey of Company I, came into the tent and asked why the Colonel was delaying. The Colonel answered: "I was thinking in what clothes I shall die." Wilsey started a line of cheerful talk, but Ellsworth stayed sad, took from a trunk a new uniform fresh from the tailor, saying: "If I am to be shot tomorrow, and I have a presentiment that my blood is immediately required by the country, it is in this suit that I shall die."

IN the midnight hustling and confusion of getting the regiment on board the transports, Ellsworth was among the gayest. Forty rounds of cartridges were issued to each man. The light of a clear gold moon glistened on the bayonets as twenty rowboats took them out to the transports. The moon faded to a white ghost, and the sun's rim was edging up the horizon as the Zouaves arrived at Alexandria, where crowds of spectators lined a river-bank expecting the first battle of the war. A Union sloop-of-war had preceded the transports, under a flag of truce had sent a message giving the Confederate troops one hour to leave town. Ellsworth was told the Confederate force of five hundred had agreed to evacuate,

and with a few straggling picket shots, had done so.

Ellsworth took charge of affairs by orders for control of railway traffic, and started personally for the telegraph office to stop communication southward, taking a squad with a sergeant, and his friends the regimental chaplain Reverend E. W. Dodge, Lieutenant H. J. Winsor, and the New York *Tribune* man, E. H. House. A short walk, and they came to the Marshall House, a second-class hotel, flying at the top of its flagpole the secession flag which could be seen from the White House at Washington.

Ellsworth ordered the sergeant back for a company of troops, threw open the front door of the hotel, and walked in to ask a barefoot man arrayed only in shirt and trousers, what sort of flag it was over the roof. The man said he was only a boarder and knew nothing of it. Ellsworth sprang up the stairs, followed by his friends, to the third story, where with a ladder he mounted to the roof, cut down the secession flag with a knife loaned by Winsor.

Then as the *Tribune* man told it: "We turned to descend, Corporal Brownell leading the way, and Ellsworth immediately following with the flag. As Brownell reached the first landing-place, after a descent of some dozen steps, a man jumped from a dark passage, and hardly noticing Brownell, leveled a double-barreled gun square at the Colonel's breast. Brownell made a quick pass to turn the weapon aside, but the fellow's hand was firm, and he discharged one barrel straight to its aim, the slugs or buckshot with which it was loaded entering the Colonel's heart, and killing him at the instant. I think my arm was resting on poor Ellsworth's shoulder at the moment; at any rate, he seemed to fall almost from my grasp. He was on the second or third step from the landing, and he dropped forward with that heavy, horrible, headlong weight which comes of sudden death."

The second barrel was aimed at Brownell, and missed him because he sent his own rifle slug into the face of Ellsworth's killer. "Brownell did not know how fatal his shot had been, and so before the man dropped, he thrust his saber-bayonet through and through the body, sending the dead man violently down the upper section of the second flight of stairs."

Ellsworth's body was laid on a bed in a room near by, the secession flag wrapped about his feet. The *Tribune* man left for a few moments to make sure of the seizure of the telegraph office, which had been Ellsworth's wish. "When I returned to the hotel, there was a terrible scene enacting. A woman had run from a lower room to the stairway where the body of the assassin lay, and cried aloud with an agony so heartrending that no person could witness it without emotion. She flung her arms in the air, struck her brow madly, offered no reproaches, appeared almost regardless of our presence, and yielded only to her own frantic despair. It was her husband that had been shot—James W. Jackson, proprietor of the hotel." Also, he was the partly dressed man who had told Ellsworth: "I am only a boarder here." A coroner's jury of Alexandria citizens held an inquest over the remains of Jackson and gave a verdict, "The deceased came to his death at the hands of the troops of the United States while in defense of his private property, in his own house," which was at variance with the telegram sent by Corporal Brownell to Troy, New York:

Father: Colonel Ellsworth was shot dead this morning. I killed his murderer.
—Frank.

News of the Ellsworth killing had special interest in Lexington, Kentucky, as James T. Jackson, the killer of Ellsworth was the youngest brother of a practicing physician in Lexington. The Kentucky *Statesman* referred to Ellsworth's killer as the "immortal hero who slew the ill-bred braggart at Alexandria," and exclaimed: "We rejoice in the death of Ellsworth, and only regret that every man who followed him did not share the same fate. Mr. Jackson was too noble a man to fall a victim to the infamous thieves of Ellsworth's regiment." The tragedy was cited as an example of "Lincoln's despotism," and the many friends of Doctor Jackson were urged to avenge the death of his brother by joining the Confederate army.

ON the morning of Ellsworth's death, his body arrived in Washington and was placed in a Navy Yard building, where black crepe and black bunting framed United States flags. The tolling of bells went on, and the flags of public build-

ings were at half-mast. Around the casket stood a Zouave guard of honor.

In the White House a New York *Herald* man with Senator Wilson of Massachusetts entered the library and saw the President standing at a window looking out across the Potomac. "He did not move until we approached very closely, when he turned round abruptly, and advanced toward us, extending his hand: 'Excuse me, but I cannot talk.' We supposed his voice had given away from some cause or other, and we were about to inquire, when to our surprise the President burst into tears, and concealed his face in his handkerchief. He walked up and down the room for some moments, and we stepped aside in silence, not a little moved at such an unusual spectacle, in such a man and such a place.

"After composing himself somewhat, Mr. Lincoln sat down and invited us to him. 'I will make no apology, gentlemen,' said he, 'for my weakness; but I knew poor Ellsworth well and held him in high regard. Just as you entered the room, Captain Fox left me, after giving me the painful details of his unfortunate death. The event was so unexpected, and the recital so touching, that it quite unmanned me.' The President here made a violent effort to restrain his emotion, and after a pause he proceeded with a tremulous voice to give us the incidents of the tragedy that had occurred. 'Poor fellow,' he said as he closed his recital; 'it was doubtless an act of rashness, but it only shows the heroic spirit that animates our soldiers, from high to low, in this righteous cause of ours. . . . One fact has reached me which is a great consolation to my heart, and quite a relief after this melancholy affair. I learn from several persons that when the Stars and Stripes were raised again in Alexandria, many of the people in the town actually wept for joy. All the South is not secessionist.'"

Senator Chandler came in to tell the President of going with "his Michigan boys" to Alexandria and seeing them capture a company of Confederate dragoons. "Though by this time the President was quite himself again," wrote the *Herald* man, "we thought it was not a fitting moment to open a discussion of the matter which had brought us to the White House, so we took our leave without referring to it."

Mrs. Lincoln visited the Navy Yard in the afternoon, left flowers, and talked with Corporal Brownell about the trag-

edy. An hour later when the embalming was completed, she came again with the President, and they looked on the face of Ellsworth in death, Lincoln moaning: "My boy! My boy! Was it necessary this sacrifice should be made?" Lincoln invited the Zouave guards to take the body to the White House for the funeral services.

So they brought the body into the East room, where on a Saturday morning came thousands to see a youth lying in state, clad in full uniform, while bells tolled on and flags drooped. Over the country likewise in many cities at the funeral hour, bells tolled and flags were at half-mast. General Scott in full uniform, leaning on an aide, bestowed a long, inquiring look on the corpse, spoke distinct responses to the prayers of the church, and gave complete attention to the sermon. The Cabinet members attended, and leading military and naval officers, besides many Senators and Representatives. When at one o'clock an escort of Zouaves and a procession of carriages followed the hearse through immense crowds to the railroad station, the brass bands gave dirges of grief, again the bells tolled, and a salute of minute guns was heard from a battery at Arlington Heights. In New York City, at Albany, the body of Ellsworth lay in state and was viewed by thousands; it had escorts with muffled drums and reversed arms.

Then home at last to Mechanicsville, New York, arriving in a gale of wind and wild rain. At Troy George W. Demers had spoken a requiem: "Sleep on, brave young warrior; narrow and silent is thy tent. The green mantle of thy mother earth shall enwrap thee. Thy nodding plume shall be the bent branches of the weeping willow. The robin shall sound for thee thy morning reveille. Thy bugle note shall be the sweet song of the oriole. All night long the watch-fires of heaven's dome shall burn above thy bed, whence no alarm shall rouse thee." Addressing a letter "To the Father and Mother of Colonel Elmer E. Ellsworth," the President wrote on May 25:

My dear Sir and Madam: In the untimely loss of your noble son, our affliction here is scarcely less than your own. So much of promised usefulness to one's country, and of bright hopes for one's self and friends, have rarely been so suddenly dashed as in his fall. In size, in years, and in youthful appearance a boy only, his power to com-

mand men was surpassingly great. This power, combined with a fine intellect, an indomitable energy, and a taste altogether military, constituted in him, as seemed to me, the best natural talent in that department I ever knew.

And yet he was singularly modest and deferential in social intercourse. My acquaintance with him began less than two years ago; yet through the latter half of the intervening period it was as intimate as the disparity of our ages and my engrossing engagements would permit. To me he appeared to have no indulgences or pastimes; and I never heard him utter a profane or an intemperate word. What was conclusive of his good heart, he never forgot his parents. The honors he labored for so laudably, and for which in the sad end he so gallantly gave his life, he meant for them no less than for himself.

In the hope that it may be no intrusion upon the sacredness of your sorrow, I have ventured to address you this tribute to the memory of my young friend and your brave and early fallen child.

May God give you that consolation which is beyond all earthly power.

Sincerely your friend in a common affliction,

A. Lincoln.

SO Ellsworth became a legend identified for all time with the United States flag, with patriotic valor. His pale eager face, delicately chiseled features framed in chestnut curls, fascinated gazing thousands who came for a look at him in his coffin, because to many he was the image of youth moving to drums and banners for the sake of emblems and mystic, inexplicable causes. Northern propaganda used him as a conspicuous and dramatic martyr, sunk his faults and vanities, his pretensions and ego, and held him up as "one of God's pet lambs." His grave foreshadowed a long row of the graves of comrade youths lying alongside, each of them taken off in an eye-blink. The tears of Lincoln at the news of this one death was grief over the loss of a loyal young clansman—and was also unspeakable woe over the fate of mankind that brought blood and putrefaction into the sweet air of a Virginia May day. For a long time it would be in the Executive Mansion as the secretaries had it: "The echoes of Ellsworth's cheery and manly voice seemed to linger in the corridors and rooms."

MAGNIFICENT GESTURE

(Continued from page 37)

"Don't. Don't try."

"Only a catastrophe in Shanghai could stop me. Or here."

After a moment his quiet voice rose to her: "It won't be here." He was silent for a long moment, and then he said, "I can see you very clearly. You look very strong and beautiful."

Her heart ached, and she remained rigid, making no reply. After a while he turned and went away.

Next morning she was eating breakfast when she sensed an unusual activity. The way three men marched in through the gateway, and later three more, briskly,

purposefully, bore a portent; of what, she could not guess. She dressed hurriedly in breeches and blouse; saw, through the window, a young Chinese officer leave quickly by the gate. In a few moments he returned, and with him came another officer, taller, not Chinese—nor Anglo-Saxon. She sat on the *chaise-longue*, her hands clasped between her knees. Uneasiness crept upon her; yet she told herself she had no cause to be uneasy, for the nameless young man had said—She rose abruptly, wondering why she should believe him. She did not know why, but she believed him.

There was an explosion—distant, muffled; a flat, hard explosion; its echoes snapped violently away and left sudden calm again. But in this calm she found herself breathless, stricken. And listening—for another pistol-shot. That one, she decided, had been in this house—at least, within the garden wall. But no one appeared. The brook flowed, and the breeze moved, and the sun shone; a bird sang.

Minutes later there was a knock on her door, and she spun from the window and cried: "Come in."

He came in.

COLDS

go quicker when you do these two things:



Sal Hepatica does BOTH!

"WHEN A COLD comes your way," modern physicians will tell you, "you can often help throw it off more quickly by doing certain simple things." Here are two "first steps" to take:

- 1.—Cleanse the intestinal tract.
- 2.—Help Nature combat the acidity that frequently accompanies a cold.

You can do both these things at once by taking Sal Hepatica!

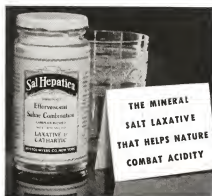
For not only does this mineral salt laxative cleanse the intestines—gently, thoroughly—but Sal Hepatica helps Nature combat acidity. In this

way Sal Hepatica aids your system to return to its normal alkalinity.

Ask your doctor—see if he doesn't stress the importance of taking both a laxative and an anti-acid in treating a cold.

Be modern—fight a cold the modern way

So whenever a cold comes your way, take Sal Hepatica . . . two teaspoonfuls in a glass of water. In addition, get plenty of rest and quiet—go to bed and call a doctor if your cold is severe. Watch your diet. Drink plenty of liquids. It pays to fight a cold the modern way. Get a bottle of Sal Hepatica today.



TUNE IN: Fred Allen's "Town Hall Tonight"
— Full hour of music, drama, amateurs, fun. Every Wednesday night—N. B. C.

She began: "What—"

His look, steady, driven, stopped her; and he said: "All right. You can take off. Promises mean nothing in China, but I'm asking you to make a promise. If I know you, if I know as much about you as I think I know, you'll promise. If there's a God, you'll keep the promise."

She felt the drive of his deep, taut emotion. She raised a hand. "I think I could keep any promise a man like you would ask me to make."

He said: "When you reach Shanghai, forget this place—entirely, completely."

"Of course, if you ask it."

"No matter what you hear."

"No matter what I hear."

"All right." He took a breath. "I'll see you off."

She did not ask what had happened.

Turning, she began to pack her bag.

He said: "There's another I'd like to ask."

She did not look about. "What?"

"Give up your flight at Shanghai."

She clipped shut her bag and stood up and turned and faced him, her pale face very grave. "Did you ever make a gesture?"

"Yes."

"One you thought magnificent?"

"Perhaps."

She picked up her bag. "I'm like that. Shall we go?"

PLANES had been sent out to search for her; halfway, a fast Boeing soared and leveled off and an arm waved. She waved back, and the Boeing gunned hard and crept ahead, soon a quarter of a mile ahead, and she followed it to her landfall and dropped her ship on the roadstead. Launches, officials, met her, and cameras clicked, and she gave back banter but little information. On the wharf, a river of faces swept past her as she took long strides toward the official limousine.

"But where were you tied up, Miss Haydran?"

"I don't really know. Back there—somewhere. I made my own repairs."

"Landed at night, didn't you?"

"Yes, of course."

"But how—without ground lights?"

"I suppose I was very fortunate."

At last she reached the sanctuary of a hotel apartment and locked the door with a vengeance. She threw herself on the bed, spread-eagled, and stared at the ceiling, and remembered how he had stood on the field, head lowered, fists clenched hard against his thighs, as she took off. And all the memories of that strange landing, the garden, the tranquillity, the man talking to her from the shadow below her window, the shot, his suppressed violence—all these flooded her and stirred in her a vague, a nameless but powerful longing.

She wrenched herself out of the mood and bathed, soaked her body in the hot water, dressed. She was working over her charts, a cigarette drooping from one corner of her mouth, when Major Coldhaven, the military attaché, was announced.

"Oh, hullo, Major. Sit down. Grab a cigarette. Sorry I've nothing to drink."

He was fiftieth, blunt in the framework, with poor eyes rectified in some measure by smart nose glasses. "It's

blamed good to see you again, Miss Haydran. Like welcoming home a hometown girl. Congratulations!"

"Only I'm not home. *En passant*."

He stood way back on his blunt heels, went on in his thick, monotonous voice:

"I had three planes out directly you were three hours overdue. We were genuinely worried. B-r-r! You chose a dangerous route." He flapped a squarish white hand. "These intra-province wars—mercenary roving the interior. We calculated that if you were thrown off your route, you might run into the hunting grounds of the notorious General Fang."

"He can't be very notorious. I've never heard of him."

"Bah! You've been out of Shanghai for a year. China's fertile ground for

"Is there a Junior College within a fifty-mile radius of New York City which will allow my daughter to make two credits required for high-school graduation and at the same time take some college work?"

The father who asked this was immediately put in touch with a Junior College meeting his requirements. The Junior College offering two years of a liberal arts education, or definite training for business or a profession, is meeting a definite need in education today. Two years in a cultural Junior College, with a major in art, is excellent preparation for a course in interior decoration, costume design, etc.



Turn to Redbook's Educational Directory, which begins on Page 122. If you do not find the type of school or Junior College offering the courses in which you are interested, write to the Director of our Department of Education, 230 Park Avenue, New York City. She will gladly assist you in your selection.

notoriety. Fang grew like a mushroom. He's the Nemesis of the Nationalist government. Came out of God knows where—likely the north. Got himself together half a dozen planes or more,—no one knows exactly,—a band of roughneck mercenaries and a reputation for blood-thirst unequalled in my time. Rumor's got around that he's an expatriate Japanese, but I and others firmly believe he's a Mongol from the north. He always attacks at night."

"But why your intense indignation, Major?"

The Major colored. But she knew the answer. She knew that foreigners had strong commercial interests in internal China, that in certain quarters feeling ran high against anyone not aligned with the Nationalist government.

The Major blew his nose. "Ahr-rump! And so your next stop will be Guam. Great! Wonderful! Marvelous courage! The spirit of youth is a grand

and glorious thing! . . . Well, I must be going."

She saw him to the door, closed it, leaned against it. The platitudinous old idiot! And then she thought: General Fang. She wondered if this were the general she had not been permitted to see. And she remembered the concealed hangars, the field that was so deftly camouflaged that when she had risen two thousand feet above it, it looked not like a field at all. "It was!" she cried in a whisper. "And he was one of the mercenaries!" Then she frowned, puzzled, at memory of the shot.

She dreaded the banquet; but she went, made a terse, simple speech, and met many whom she had known before in Shanghai.

One said: "Pity you hadn't started from Shanghai and so flown around and back."

"I guess I hadn't thought of it then."

"We were thinking—how romantic if you'd landed in General Fang's camp and then come out to tell us all. Have you heard of General Fang? Were you tired on the China stretch?"

"Tired! Eighteen hours in the plane! Rather, yes."

IT was not until afterward, until the dancing began, that she saw Elise. It made her heart go suddenly cold. Elise slouched more than ever, and looked a little more tired and voluptuous and a little more discontented.

"Hullo, Flo. You're looking swell. They tell me you're on a round-the-world flight. Swell!"

"You're looking well, Elise."

"You're telling me? I feel lousy." She was a little drunk, and teetered around saying: "That fellow came with me, but hell knows where he's disappeared. Join me in a drink."

"Wagon. You know—" She shrugged, smiled.

"Oh, I know. Lady aviator and all. Got to keep up scratch. Well, be seeing you."

"I thought you and Harvey'd gone to Singapore."

"Did go to S'pore. Came back again."

She teetered off, and Major Coldhaven came over with a very grave face. "Honest, Miss Haydran, we did not invite them. We didn't. They—ah—crashed the party, kind of. Damned sorry."

She said: "But really it doesn't matter. I've got to be getting anyhow. I'm so tired."

She got her wraps and fled; and outside, ducking through the garden, she ran into Harvey Prescott.

"McGawd, Flo!"

She snapped, "Hullo, Harvey," long-legged on her way.

But he stopped her, gripping her wrist. He was a very tall young man, very round of face, heavy in the framework; gone to more roundness generally, and softer, since she'd last seen him.

"Listen, Flo—"

"I'm in a hurry. Really I am."

"Want to talk to you and tell you—Oops, m'dear! Just a little trifle swacked. C'mon; know a place where we can sit and talk."

"Will you let me go?"

"Sh! Not s' loud. Flo. Listen, darlin'—I love you much as ever—"



Evening in Paris Perfume in de luxe bottle with square chromium cap. . . **\$10.00**
Triple Vanity holding Rouge, Lipstick and Face Powder (loose or compact). **\$2.75**



Evening in Paris Perfume, Toilet Water, Face Powder, Talcum Powder, Single Loose Vanity and Lipstick in a satin-lined, triple-sectioned gift box. **\$10.00**



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SOME WOMAN LOVES HIM?"**

Fired by a woman's love they charged for the mouth of Hell—cheering as they rode into the valley of Death—while all the world wondered! The thunder of their hoofbeats still rings 'round the world—to ride in glory forever... And it will resound as long as the heart of woman can inspire the heart of man to deeds of daring and heroism... The immortal Light Brigade charges again!



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and
OLIVIA de HAVILLAND
in
**"THE CHARGE OF THE
LIGHT BRIGADE"**
Patric Knowles • Henry Stephenson • Nigel
Bruce • Donald Crisp • David Niven • Robert Barrat
Directed by
MICHAEL CURTIZ

Warner Bros.

Ask Your Theatre Manager when he plans to show this picture!

"You'd better look after Elise."

"Tell with her. Fine wet smack of a wife she turned out to be. Flo, it's you—me and you—"

"Let—me—go!"

"Flo! Listen, Flo—"

She did not slap him. She balled her fist and struck him in the stomach. He doubled over, and she ran on through the garden, her cheeks burning, a stifled sob in her throat.

ALONE in her apartment, she sat on the edge of a chair, her knees together, her heels outward. And she felt so very much alone, so very lonely. Love had never touched her till Harvey came along two years ago. Planes, engines, flights—these had occupied her time and mind. At twenty she had become an expert navigator—at twenty-one a tyro in love. Falling open, she fell hard. Harvey had turned her inside out, and she had lived that year for love alone, giddy and starry-eyed with it. And then Elise had come along, lazy, sumptuously built; and quite effortlessly, with a yawn, she had taken Harvey away. Flo's world had crashed around her. Proud, she had been humiliated, cut to the quick. And she had not got over it. It made her reckless, abandoned, but not toward men, not toward drink—but toward danger, hard and raw. It was love she wanted, she supposed; caresses, a man's strong arm, respite from the awful loneliness she had come to know.

"Maybe it's because men are afraid of me," she thought. "I'm a heroine, breaking records, a pilgrim of the air, a gawky jane, a glory-hunter: all that sort of row. Really, I'm an idiot."

She went to bed and tossed, and slept fitfully, and was afraid again of her old love of Harvey. . . .

He came next day, a little before noon, and was a little drunk, but humble. "I'm a fool, Flo. I was a fool to let you down the way I did. I'm at the deep end, I tell you. I can't get on with Elise. Drink, drink all the time; we're never sober."

She felt a little brave this morning. "I'm sorry, Harvey."

"I love you, Flo. Came up from S'pore to see you. Really. Stay here, Flo. I love you."

It shook her, terrified her. "I'm so sorry, Harvey."

"It wasn't all my fault. You don't know Elise. I can't seem to straighten out. I need some one to help me—some one like you, darling. You could. I'm all in a muddle. I mean to do right, but—but with everything the way it is—Oh, hell!"

"I'm leaving tomorrow," she said.

"Don't. Stay and love me, Flo. Help me. I need your help."

She stood up. "I must go on."

He stood up, slowly, like an old man, and took her in his arms.

"Don't," she said.

"Honest to God, Flo, I love you."

He kissed her, hard, savagely, and she stood rigid in his arms and closed her eyes and felt her breath drawn from her, and knew that she was being recaptured again, but in a way that tortured her. He kissed her throat and her neck, and she began to shake all over.

"Don't go, Flo. Help me. Help me straighten out."

The flight beyond was blotted out, all its danger, its aching distances, its certain doom. Yet here was an equal danger that she felt would require far more fortitude. But it drew her magnetwise, stumbling, uncertain—yet it drew her. "You're strong, Flo. I'm not. I need you."

"Go now, Harvey. Let me be alone a little."

"All I've thought about, Flo, was that wonderful year—"

"Yes. Yes." She nodded dumbly. "All I've thought about— But go now. Please go. Let me—let me think."

Flight postponed:

It was mad, she knew, and futile. The city, spewing gossip always, would catch on; but she told herself she did not care much. If he failed her again, she would surely die. She could not stand a second blow. Indeed, she had been unable to withstand the first. Round-the-world flight: that was a magnificent gesture. But to make it again, if he failed her, would be an anticlimax, a weak and abortive gesture.

Harvey Prescott knew that he had weakened her; he knew he had postponed her flight onward. Did he know, she asked herself, at what sacrifice to pride, her own pride?

SHE walked alone in the garden next night, hearing the distant music of an orchestra. Her head ached, and her heart seemed a bruised thing in her breast. "It is futile, it is mad." And in the next breath: "It is mad, but perhaps not futile. It would be wonderful to win, to raise up his head again. He is weak. But maybe he can be strong. He left me once, but possibly he has learned a lesson." Round and round in her head these convictions and counter-convictions spun and collided.

She came to a place where the moonlight streamed down, and she looked up and could have cried, it was so beautiful. A step roused her, and she turned, saw a man coming toward her. He walked slowly, and a cigarette's red end flicked to the ground.

"You looked especially beautiful just then."

"Oh—"

He came and stood in the moonlight with her, his thin face very brown and taut, his head lowered. She could not see his lips move, but she heard his quiet, deep voice:

"Do you mind if I say that?"

She was breathless. "No."

There was a long pause, and then he said: "I came to ask you again not to fly on."

"You came a long way."

"Flew. That is, part of the way. My plane's up the river." He paused, added in a lower voice: "My plane isn't equipped with the usual papers."

She said in a flat, congested voice: "I knew, when I came here, when I heard—I knew you must be one of Fang's men."

"And you kept your promise," he said; and then, in a reflective tone: "Yes, you kept your promise." His lips tightened, and his eyes leveled on her. "I wish to God you would make me another: don't fly on!"

It would be easy now, she thought, since she had already postponed her

flight; but her heart was full, her throat taut, and she dared not trust her lips.

His voice went on, vibrant with sincerity: "Don't, don't! It's a magnificent gesture, but it's a fetish too. Something drove you to it; I don't know what; I won't ask. But it's grown and taken full possession of you."

She closed her eyes very tightly, held her arms rigid against her rigid sides.

His voice went on after a moment, coming to her out of what seemed to be on his part a profound and brooding reverie: "This General Fang. . . . Not so very long ago he was a civilian employed by an aircraft company. The life was easy, and he sold many planes and was fêted royally wherever he went among the warring armies. He was an excellent pilot and a good navigator; but he was also a spendthrift, and it was a case of come easy, go easy—until the aircraft company collapsed and he was left stranded in the interior of China, dead broke."

"A notorious war lord offered him a good salary and bonus to teach a number of young men the finer points of flying. He needed the money and he accepted, and then one day he was leading a flight of six planes containing two men each. They were over their own territory and unarmed—or at least he thought. But two planes were armed. They turned on the others, and all were shot down, including Fang. He spent two months recuperating. Those four men in the two planes had been secretly bought over by a rival general. Fang never saw them again. But he was determined to even the score, and one night he accepted the war lord's offer to lead a combat flight. He became grim, unlike his old self, and grew more savage until the war lord became afraid and tried to get rid of him. So Fang, in self-defense, got rid of the war lord and assumed command."

"Fang was never a cutthroat, but in order to scare the rival armies, he began circulating wild tales of imaginary atrocities; and it was then that he assumed the name of General Fang and spread about himself a cloak of mystery. It was really an elaborate advertising campaign, and it worked. And always he hunted for the four men who had turned so treacherously on him. But the old story worked out. His own men became drunk with the notoriety, and ambitious too; and this came finally to a head the morning of the day you left."

HE paused, his hands two knotted brown lumps at his sides. His low, driving voice still burned in her ears, and suddenly she found herself saying: "My flight is ended."

"Good!" he cried. And then he straightened, took a step forward, gripped her arms. "This," he said bleakly, "is wrong, but—" He kissed her swiftly, passionately, and then held her off, saying in a deep, winded voice: "I'll go now."

Her heart swelled, and she leaned forward and put her lips to his and then held on to him, tightly, and felt his own embrace grow magically about her.

"No," she said. "Don't go."

"What should I do?"

"Stay."

"I want to," he muttered.

"I love you," she said.

"You must love me. I know I love you. Let me look at you."

"Don't. Hold me. Just hold me."

Embraced, they stood tense and wordless for a minute, and then he said: "You don't even know me."

"No more, no less than you know me. But you—you saved me."

"The flight would have been suicide." "Not the flight—everything."

He said after a moment: "My name's John Petersen."

"Yes, dear John."

"They didn't want to let you go, back there. And back there, back there"—he pressed her hands tightly in his—"I fell in love with you, but it wouldn't have been fair. The leader of the opposition drew his gun and it missed fire. Mine didn't."

"Thank God, John—thank God!"

"It was something you did to me, something you awakened in me. I saw suddenly that this vengeance of mine against

those four men was stupid, childish. I saw that if I had used sense and discretion in the first place, if I hadn't let myself be drawn into the web, the rest wouldn't have happened."

She was nodding, smiling with a new tenderness. "Yes, yes, I can understand, General Fang."

He raised her hands to his lips and said through her fingers, in a voice a little cluttered: "I was, darling, I was General Fang."

TURKEY IN THE WHITE HOUSE

(Continued from page 15)

a national holiday for three-quarters of a century later.

It was about 1845 that the sleepy city along the Potomac, particularly its merchants, began to be aware of some of the joys—and commercial possibilities—attached to the holiday which was celebrated in the North. So in that year grocers' ads appeared in the town, announcing: "Sixty barrels of white wine, forty barrels of champagne, and New York cider, two half-casks of French brandy, all by recent packet from New York via Alexandria." Eighteen years later the holiday had taken firmer root, and during the middle of the Civil War, Lincoln issued a proclamation setting aside the last Thursday in November as Thanksgiving Day.

For the First Lady of the Land, the problem of shopping for the Thanksgiving dinner is not onerous, because instead of going to market for the proverbial bird, the bird comes to her. For the past thirty years the White House turkey has been furnished by a fancier in Rhode Island, sometimes supplemented by gifts from other States. Of the six standard varieties of domesticated turkey in the United States—bronze, Narragansett, buff, slate, white and black—the bronze and Narragansett are the largest, and the varieties usually served at the White House.

Taft, however, used to receive turkeys from Tazewell County, Virginia, from which Queen Victoria also received turkeys and Albemarle pippins every year during her reign. More recently Bruce Kremer, former Democratic National Committeeman from Montana, has been boosting the merits of Montana turkeys by sending gifts to members of the Roosevelt Cabinet. In 1916 Senator Ollie James of Kentucky also sending Rhode Island's prerogative by sending Woodrow Wilson a blue-grass bird.

"A splendid specimen," he boasted to his colleagues on Capitol Hill. "Corn-fed and spoon-fed with a mash that seasons the meat as nothing else can. The blue-grass turkey has a gamey flavor and is not killed more than three days before it is to be eaten. Down in Kentucky we hang it from the top of a twenty-foot pole to chill it thoroughly without freezing—but I suppose Mrs. Wilson can hardly do that in the back yard of the White House."

Mrs. Wilson, incidentally, was known as a great connoisseur of turkeys, while First Lady. To pass her critical eye, the bird had to have a smooth leg, soft bill and—if fresh—bright eyes and moist feet. Old, tough birds have scaly feet, she said, while young birds have a breast-

bone which yields readily to the pressure of the finger.

Mrs. Roosevelt's specialty is cranberry sauce, her recipe for which follows:

1 lb. cranberries

Pick over and boil in 1 pint of water in open kettle until all are broken. It is well to crush the berries as they boil. Add water if necessary.

Put through sieve.

Add sugar to taste.

Set on stove for another three minutes to boil. Then set aside to cool.

Mrs. Hoover took great delight in dressing up the table, the theme being "Fruits of the Harvest." From the centerpiece she arranged lanes leading to it from other parts of the table, made up of golden pumpkins, squash, ears of corn, egg-plant, tomatoes and green avocados, chestnut burrs, red apples, oranges and grapes—all set upon tinted autumn leaves. Chrysanthemums and other seasonal flowers decorated the room.

Probably the most frugal Thanksgiving dinner ever served in the White House was during the war days in 1917 when President and Mrs. Wilson served only three courses. They were: (1), cream of oyster soup with slices of hot buttered toast; (2), turkey with trimmings and vegetables—burning brandy was omitted, as well as cranberries; (3), pumpkin pie, but no plum pudding—doubling on desserts was against Mrs. Wilson's idea of Hooverizing. Black coffee was served as a "digestive stimulant."

In contrast to this, President Lincoln was given the following Thanksgiving Day banquet by the Sturges Rifles, in 1861, the first year of the Civil War:

Chicken soup, roast beef, turkey, cranberry sauce, chicken, mallard duck, tame duck, boiled ham, boiled corn beef, fried oysters, boiled potatoes, sweet potatoes, boiled turnips, cabbage, celery, mince pie and Hamburg cheese.

There was nothing fancy about the service, but there was plenty of it.

President Grant also believed in paying proper tribute to his White House chef on Thanksgiving Day, and after working on his message to Congress in 1876, he sat down to the following:

Consomme imperiale Bisque de Grevise
Sherry

Woodcock patties Salmon

White wine

Turkey Filet of Beef Crawfish pudding

Breast of pheasant Goose livers

Roman punch Champagne

Canvasback duck Warm sweet dish

Red wine

During the present Administration, President Roosevelt invariably goes to Warm Springs for Thanksgiving.

He is not the first President of our country to spend the holiday away from the White House. . . . President Coolidge left whenever possible, and the last year of his incumbency—1928—is considered the quietest Thanksgiving on record. President-elect Hoover was then aboard the U. S. S. *Maryland* on his good-will tour of South America, while the President and Mrs. Coolidge were vacationing at the Swananoa Club in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia.

Mrs. Coolidge took two shotguns with him, but was rained out of hunting. Before going to church in Charlottesville, he tested the guns and had good luck with the traps in the rear of the club, but was disappointed later by the rain. He paced up and down the covered marble terrace and glanced at the darkly clouded sky. He and Mrs. Coolidge were alone at dinner in the big marble dining-hall at seven-thirty.

Afterward they sat by an open fire and probably discussed the announcement of Governor and Mrs. Trumbull of Connecticut that their daughter Anna was engaged to the Coolidges' son John.

THANKSGIVING dinner at Warm Springs is served at noon, chiefly because it is attended not only by Mr. Roosevelt, but by all the youngsters of the sanitarium; and dinner in the evening would keep them up past bedtime. Five turkeys are necessary to satisfy their appetites, and the President himself carves one of them. Around him at the head table sit twelve boys and girls who draw lots for the honor.

Dinner lasts usually for about three hours, during which there is singing and sometimes stereopticon views showing the development of Warm Springs. Dinner always ends with a talk by the President. On this occasion in 1934 he told of his early efforts to regain the use of the muscles of his afflicted legs after his attack of infantile paralysis, and how he discovered that swimming was beneficial, especially in warm water. Thus ten years ago he heard of Warm Springs, where he came and improved, and has been endeavoring to build up the institution for others ever since. The physical recovery that he was able to make, he was sure, he said, also could be made by those who had sat with him at Thanksgiving dinner that day.

Afterward he and Mrs. Roosevelt stood at the main door and shook hands with all the children as they passed out.



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Cuticle has a natural tendency to grow dry and scaly. Cutting it is the worst possible thing you can do—it makes it grow out rough, ragged and lumpy. So you need a cuticle remover. But *ordinary* cuticle re-

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THE HOLLOW DRAGON

(Continued from page 54)

and in fact, signed the express-receipt when it was delivered. It's six inches wide, six inches high, and an even foot long. Perfectly regular in shape, you see, except for the decorative bas-reliefs—the dragons. Typical conventionalized Japanese craftsmanship, by the way. Nothing really remarkable."

"Heathen idolatry," said Miss Letitia distinctly; her opihidian eyes glared their chronic hate with a fanatical fire. "Devil!"

ELLERY glanced at her. Then he said: "Miss Merrivel has told me the door-stop isn't valuable." Cooper and Gallant nodded. "What's its composition?"

"Natural soapstone," said Gallant; his expression was still worried. "You know, tho': smooth and slippery mineral that's used so much in the Orient—steatite, technically. It's a talc. Jito imports hundreds of gadgets made out of it."

"Oh, this door-stop was something from his curio establishment?"

"No. It was sent to the old man four or five months ago as a gift by some friend traveling in Japan."

"A white man?" asked Ellery suddenly. They all looked blank. Then Cooper said with an uneasy smile: "I don't believe Mr. Kagiwa has ever said anything about him, Mr. Queen."

"I see," said Ellery, and he smoked for a moment in silence. "Sent, eh? By express?" Cooper nodded. "You're a man of method, Mr. Cooper?"

The secretary looked surprised. "I beg your pardon?"

"Obviously, obviously. Secretaries have a deplorable habit of saving things. May I see that express-receipt, please? Evidence is always better than testimony, as any lawyer will tell you. The receipt may provide us with a clue. Sender's name may indicate—"

"Oh," said Cooper. "So that's your notion?" I'm sorry, Mr. Queen. There was no sender's name on the receipt. I remember very clearly."

Ellery looked pained. He blew out a curtain of smoke, communing with his thoughts in its folds. When he spoke again, it was with abruptness, as if he had decided to take a plunge. "How many dragons are there on this door-stop, Mr. Cooper?"

"Idolatry," repeated Miss Letitia venomously.

Miss Merrivel paled a little. "You think—"

"Five," said Cooper. "The bottom face, of course, is blank. Five dragons, Mr. Queen."

"Pity it isn't seven," said Ellery without smiling. "The mystic number." He rose and took a turn about the room, smoking and frowning in the sweet heavy air at the coils of a golden monster embroidered on a silk wall-hanging. Miss Merrivel shivered suddenly, and moved closer to the tall thin-faced young man. "Tell me," continued Ellery, turning and squinting at them through smoke-haze, "is your little Jito Kagiwa a Christian?"

Only Miss Letitia was not startled; that woman would have outstared Beelzebub himself. "Lord preserve us!" she cried in a shrill voice. "That devil?"

"Now why," asked Ellery patiently, "do you persist in calling your brother-in-law a devil, Miss Gallant?"

She set her metallic lips and glared. Miss Merrivel said in a warm tone: "He is not. He's a nice, kind old gentleman. He may not be a Christian, Mr. Queen, but he isn't a heathen, either. He doesn't believe in anything like that. He's often said so."

"Then he certainly isn't a heathen, strictly speaking," murmured Ellery. "A heathen, you know, is a person belonging to a nation or race neither Christian, Jewish nor Mohammedan, who has not abandoned the original creed of his people."

Miss Letitia looked baffled. Then she smiled triumphantly: "He is, too! I've often heard him talk of some outlandish belief called—"

"Shinto," muttered Cooper. "It's not true, Merry, that Mr. Kagiwa doesn't believe in anything. He believes in the essential goodness of mankind, in each man's conscience being his best guide. That's the moral essence of Shinto, isn't it, Mr. Queen?"

"Is it?" murmured Ellery in an absent way. "I suppose so. Most interesting. He wasn't a cultist? Shinto is rather primitive, you know."

"Idolater," said Miss Letitia, like a phonograph needle caught in one groove.

THEY looked uneasily about them. On the study desk there was a fat-bellied little idol of shiny black obsidian. In a corner stood a squat and heavy suit of Samurai armor. The silk of the dragon rippled a little on the wall under the urge of the sea breeze coming in through the open window.

"He didn't belong to some ancient secret Japanese society?" persisted Ellery. "Has he had much correspondence from the East? Has he received slant-eyed visitors? Did he seem afraid of anything?"

His voice died away, and the dragon stirred again wickedly, and the Samurai looked on with his sightless, enigmatic, invisible face. The sickly-sweet odor seemed to grow stronger, filling their heads with dizzying, horrid fancies. They looked at Ellery mutely and helplessly, caught in the grip of vague primeval fears.

"And was this door-stop solid soapstone?" murmured Ellery, gazing out the window at the heaving Sound. Everything heaved and swayed; the house itself seemed afloat in an endless ocean, bobbing to the breaching of the sea. He waited for their reply, but none was audible. Big Bill Gallant shuffled his feet; he looked even more worried than before. "It couldn't have been, you know," continued Ellery thoughtfully, answering his own question.

"What makes you say that, Mr. Queen?" asked Miss Merrivel in a subdued voice.

"Common-sense. The piece being valueless from a practical standpoint, why was it stolen last night? For sentimental reasons? The only one for whom it might have possessed such an attachment is Mr. Kagiwa, and I scarcely think he would

have struck you over the head, Miss Merrivel, to retrieve his own property if he merely had a fondness for it." Aunt and nephew looked startled. "Oh, you didn't know that, of course. Yes, we had a case of simple but painful assault here last night. Gave Miss Merrivel quite a headache. The bump is, take my word for it, a thing of singular beauty. . . . Did the door-stop possess an esoteric meaning? Was it a symbol of something, a sign, a portent, a warning?" Again the breeze stirred the dragon, and they shuddered; the hatred had vanished from Miss Letitia's mad eyes, to be replaced by the naked fear of a small and malicious soul trapped in the den of its own malice.

"It—" began Cooper, shaking his head. Then he licked his dry lips and said: "This is the Twentieth Century, Mr. Queen."

"So it is," said Ellery, nodding; "wherefore we shall confine ourselves to sane and demonstrable matters. The practical alternative is that, since the door-stop was taken, it was valuable to the taker. But not, obviously, for itself alone. Deduction: it contained something valuable. That's why I said it couldn't have been a solid chunk of soapstone."

"That's the most—" said Gallant; his shoulders hunched, and he stopped and stared at Ellery in a fascinated way.

"I beg your pardon?" said Ellery.

"Nothing. I was just thinking—"

"That I had shot straight to the mark, Mr. Gallant?"

The big young man dropped his gaze and flushed; and he began to pace up and down with his hands loosely behind his back, the worried expression more evident than ever. Miss Merrivel bit her lip and sank into the nearest chair. Cooper looked restive, and Letitia Gallant's stiff clothing made rustling little sounds, like furtive animals in underbrush at night. Then Gallant stopped pacing and said in a rush:

"I suppose I may as well come out with it. Yes, you guessed it, Queen, you guessed it." Ellery looked pained. "The door-stop isn't solid. There's a hollow space inside."

"Ah! And what did it contain, Mr. Gallant?"

"Fifty thousand dollars in hundred-dollar bills."

IT is proverbial that money works miracles. In Jito Kagiwa's study it lived up to its reputation.

The dragon died. The Samurai became an empty shell of crumbling leather and metal. The house ceased rocking and stood firmly on its foundation. The very air freshened and was noticed no more. Money talked in familiar accents; and before the logic of its speech, the specter of dread, creeping things vanished in a snuffed instant. They sighed with relief in unison, and their eyes cleared again with that peculiar blankness which passes for sanity in the social world. There had been more money in the door-stop! Miss Merrivel even giggled a little.

"Fifty thousand dollars in hundred-dollar bills," nodded Mr. Ellery Queen, looking both envious and disappointed in the same instant. "That's an indecent num-

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ber of hundred-dollar bills, Mr. Gallent. Elucidate."

Bill Gallent elucidated—rapidly, his expression vastly comforted, as if a great weight had been lifted from his mind. Old Kagiwa's business—there was no concealing it longer—was on the verge of bankruptcy. Tariffs on Japanese goods had risen steeply; the universal depression had made heavy inroads on the sales of the products of frivolous industries. There had been a period, a year or so before, when it would still have been possible to retrench and lie low, weathering the economic storm. But against his stepson's advice, old Kagiwa, with the serene, silent, and unconquerable will of his race, had refused to alter his lifelong business policies. Only when ruin stared him in the eyes did his resolution waver, and then it was too late to do more than salvage the battered wreck.

"HE did it on the *q.t.*," said Gallent, shrugging; "the first I knew about it was the other day, when he called me into this room, locked the door, picked up the door-stop—he'd left it on the floor all the time!—and unscrewed one of the dragons. . . . Came out like a plug. He told me he'd found the secret cavity in the door-stop by accident right after he received it. Nothing in it, he said, and went into some long-winded explanation about the probable origin of the piece. It hadn't been a door-stop originally, of course—don't suppose the Japanese have such things. Well—there was the money, in a tight wad, which he'd stowed away in the hole. I told him he was a fool to leave it lying around that way, but he said no one knew except him and me. Naturally—" He flushed.

"I see now," said Ellery mildly, "why you were reluctant to tell me about it. It looks bad for you, obviously."

The big young man spread his hands in a helpless gesture. "I didn't steal the damned thing, but who'd believe me?" He sat down, fumbling for a cigarette.

"There's one thing in your favor," murmured Ellery. "Or at least I suppose there is. Are you his heir?"

Gallent looked up wildly. "Yes!" "Yes, he is," said Cooper in a slow, almost reluctant voice. "I witnessed the old man's will myself."

"Tut-tut! Much ado about nothing. You naturally wouldn't steal what belongs to you anyway. Buck up, Mr. Gallent; you're safe enough." Ellery sighed and began to button up his coat. "Well, ladies and gentlemen, my interest in the case, I fear, is dissipated. I had foreseen something *outré*." He smiled and picked up his hat. "This is a matter for the police, after all. Of course, I'll help if I can, but it's been my experience that local officers prefer to work alone. And really, there's nothing more that I can do."

"But what do you think happened?" asked Miss Merrivel in hushed tones. "Do you think poor Mr. Kagiwa—"

"I'm not a psychologist, Miss Merrivel. Even a psychologist, as a matter of fact, might be baffled by the inner workings of an Oriental's mind. Your policeman doesn't worry about such subtle matters, and I don't doubt the local men will clear this business up in short order. I'll bid you good day."

Miss Letitia sniffed and swept by Ellery with a disdainful swish of her skirts. Miss Merrivel wearily followed, tugging at her hat. Cooper went to the telephone, and Gallent frowned out the window at the Sound.

"Headquarters?" said Cooper, clearing his throat. "I want to speak to the Chief."

A little of the old heavy-scented alien silence crept back as they waited.

"One moment," said Ellery from the doorway. "One moment, please." The men turned, surprised. Ellery was smiling apologetically. "I've just discovered something. The human mind is a fearful thing. I've been criminally negligent, gentlemen. There's still another possibility."

"Hold the wire, hold the wire," said Cooper. "Possibility?"

Ellery waved an airy hand. "I may be wrong," he admitted handsomely. "Can either of you gentlemen direct me to an almanac?"

"Almanac?" repeated Gallent, bewildered. "Why, certainly. There's one on the library table, Queen. . . . Here, I'll get it for you." He disappeared into the adjoining room and returned a moment later with a paper-backed volume.

Ellery seized it and rifled pages, humming. Cooper and Gallent exchanged glances; then Cooper shrugged and hung up.

"Ah," said Ellery, dropping his aria like a hot coal. "Ah. . . . Hmm. . . . Well, well. Mind over matter. The pen is mightier—I may be wrong," he said quietly, closing the book and taking off his coat, "but the odds are now superbly against it. Useful things, almanacs. . . . Mr. Cooper," he said in a new voice, "let me see that express-receipt."

The metallic quality of the tone brought them both up, stiffening. The secretary got to his feet, his face suffused with blood. "Look here," he growled, "are you insinuating that I've lied to you?"

"Tut-tut," said Ellery. "The receipt, Mr. Cooper, quickly."

Bill Gallent said uneasily: "Of course, Cooper. Do as Mr. Queen says. But I don't see what possible value there can be—"

"Value is in the mind, Mr. Gallent. The hand may be quicker than the eye, but the brain is quicker than both."

COOPER glared, but he pulled open a drawer of the desk and began to rummage about. Finally he came up with a sheaf of motley papers and went through them with reluctance until he found a small yellow slip.

"Here," he said, scowling. "Damned impertinence, I think."

"It's not a question," said Ellery gently, "of what you think, Mr. Cooper." He picked up the slip, adjusted his *pince-nez*, and scanned the yellow paper with the painful scrupulosity of an archaeologist. It was an ordinary express-receipt, describing the contents of the package delivered, the date, the sending point, charges and similar information. The name of the sender was missing. The package had been shipped by a Nippon Yusen Kaisha steamer from Yokohama, Japan, had been picked up in San Francisco by the express company, and forwarded to its consignee, Jito Kagiwa, at his Westchester address. Shipping and expressage charges

had been prepaid in Yokohama, it appeared, on the basis of the forty-four-pound weight of the door-stop, which was sketchily described as being of soapstone, six by six by twelve inches in dimensions, and decorated with dragons in bas-relief.

"Well," said Cooper with a sneer. "I suppose that mess of statistics means something to you."

"This mess of statistics," said Ellery gravely, pocketing the receipt, "means everything to me. Pity if it had been lost. It's like the Rosetta Stone—it's the key to an otherwise mystifying set of facts." He looked pleased with himself; and at the same time his gray eyes behind the glasses were watchful. "The old adage was wrong. It isn't safety that you find in numbers, but enlightenment."

Gallent threw up his hands. "You're talking gibberish, Queen."

"I'm talking sense," Ellery stopped smiling. "You gentlemen are excused. By all means the Chief of Police must be called—but it's I who'll call him, and by your leave—alone."

"I WAS not to be cheated of my tidbit of *bizarrie*, after all," announced Mr. Ellery Queen that evening. Serene and self-contained, he perched on the edge of the study desk, and his hand played idly with the obsidian image.

Cooper, Miss Merrivel and the two Gallents stared at him. They were all in the last stages of nervousness. The house was rocking again, the dragon quivered in all his coils in the wind coming through the open window; and the Samurai had magically taken watchful life into himself once more. The sky through the window was dark and dappled with blacker clouds; the moon had not yet slipped from under the hem of the sea.

Ellery had departed from the Kagiwa mansion after his telephonic conversation with the Chief of Police, to be gone until evening. When he returned, men were with him. These men, quiet, solid creatures, had not come into the house. No one had approached the Gallents, the secretary, the nurse, the servants. Instead, the deputation had disappeared, swallowed up by the darkness. Now strange clankings and swishings were audible from the sea outside the study window, but no one dared rise and look.

And Ellery said: "What a world were this, how undurable its weight, if they whom Death had sundered did not meet again." A moving thought; and very apt on this occasion. We shall meet Death tonight, my friends; and even more strangely, the weight shall be lifted—as Southey predicted."

They gaped, utterly bewildered. From the night outside the clankings and the swishings continued, and occasionally there was the far shout of a man.

Ellery took off his *pince-nez* and polished the lenses slowly. "I find," he said, replacing the glasses on his nose, "that once more I have been in error. I demonstrated to you this morning that the most likely reason for the theft of the door-stop was that it was stolen for its contents. I was wrong. It was never intended that the belly of the dragon should be ravished."

"But the fifty thousand dollars—" began Miss Merrivel weakly.



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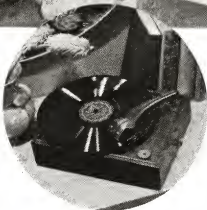
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"Mr. Queen," cried Bill Gallent, "what's going on here? What are those policemen doing outside? What are those noises? You owe us—"

"Logic," murmured Ellery, "has a way of being slippery. Quite like soapstone, Mr. Gallent. It eluded my fingers today. I pointed out that the door-stop could not have been stolen for itself. I was wrong again. It could have been stolen for itself in one remote contingency. There was one value possible to the door-stop beyond its worth in dollars and cents, or in a sentiment attached to it, or in its significance as a symbol. And that was—its utility."

"Utility?" gasped Cooper. "You mean somebody stole it to use as a door-stop?"

"That's absurd, of course. But there is still another possible utility, Mr. Cooper. What are the characteristics of this piece of carved stone which might be made use of? Well, what are its chief points physically? Its substance and weight. It is stone, and it weighs forty-four pounds."

Gallent made a queer brushing-aside gesture with one hand, rose as if under compulsion and went to the window. The others wavered, and then they too rose and went to the window, pressing eagerly toward the last, their pent-up fears and curiosity urging them on. Ellery watched them quietly.

The moon was rising now. The scene below was blue-black and sharp, a miniature etching in motion. A large rowboat was anchored a few yards from the rear of the Kagiwa house. There were men in it, and apparatus. Some one was leaning overboard, gazing intently into the water. The surface suddenly quickened into concentric life, becoming violently agitated. A man's dripping head appeared, with open mouth sucking in air. And then, half-nude, he climbed into the boat and said something, and the apparatus creaked, and a rope emerged from the blue-black water and began to wind about a small winch.

"But why," came Ellery's voice from behind them, "should an object be stolen because it is stone and weighs forty-four pounds? Regarded in this light, the view became brilliantly clear. A man was mysteriously and inexplicably missing—a sick, defenceless, wealthy old man. A heavy stone was missing. And there was the sea at his back door. Put one, two and three together, and you have—"

Some one shouted hoarsely from the boat. In the full moon a dripping mass emerged from the water at the end of the rope. As it was pulled into the boat, the silver light revealed it as a mass made up of three parts. One was a suitcase. Another was a small rectangular chunk of stone with carving on it. And the third was the stiff, naked body of a little old man with yellow skin and slanted eyes.

"—And you have," continued Ellery sharply, slipping from the edge of the desk and poking the muzzle of an automatic into the small of Bill Gallent's rigid back, "the murderer of Jito Kagiwa!"

THE shouts of the triumphant fishers made meaningless sounds in the old Japanese's study, and Bill Gallent without turning or moving a muscle, said in a dead voice: "You damned devil! How did you know?"

Miss Letitia's bitter mouth opened and closed without achieving the dignity of speech.

"I knew," said Ellery, holding the automatic quite still, "because I knew that the door-stop had no hollow at all, that it was a piece of solid stone."

"You couldn't have known that. You never saw it. You were guessing. Besides, you said—"

"That's the second time you have accused me of guessing," said Ellery in arieved tone. "I assure you, my dear Mr. Gallent, that I did nothing of the sort. But knowing that the door-stop was solid, I knew that you had lied when you maintained that you had seen with your own eyes Kagiwa's withdrawal of the dragon 'plug,' that you had seen the 'cavity' and the 'money' in it. And so I asked myself why such an obviously distressed and charming gentleman had lied. And I saw that it could only have been because you had something to conceal, and were sure the door-stop would never be found to give you the lie."

NOW the waters were stilling under the moon.

"But to be sure that the door-stop would never be found, you had to know where the door-stop was. To know where it was, you had to be the person who had disposed of it after striking Miss Merriwell over the head and stealing it from this room, unconsciously making that slithering, dragonish sound in the process which was merely the scuffing of your shoes in the thick pile of this rug. But the person who disposed of the door-stop was the person who disposed of the carcass of gentle little Jito Kagiwa; which is to say, the murderer. No, no, my dear Gallent; be fair. It wasn't precisely guesswork."

Miss Merriwell said in a ghostly voice: "Mr. Gallent, I can't— But why did you do this awful—awful—"

"I think I can tell you that," sighed Ellery. "It was apparent to me, when I saw that his story of the cache in the door-stop was a lie, that he had probably planned to tell that ingenious story from the beginning. Why? One reason might have been to cover up the real motive for the theft of the carved piece—divert the trail from its use as a mere weight for a dead body, to a fabricated use as the receptacle of a fortune, and its theft for that reason. But why the lie about the fifty thousand dollars? Why so detailed, so specific, so careful? Was it because you had embezzled fifty thousand dollars from your stepfather's business, Mr. Gallent, and knew that the discovery of this shortage was imminent, and therefore created a figmentary thief who last night stole the money which you had stolen and dissipated possibly months ago?"

Bill Gallent was silent.

"And so you built up a series of events," murmured Ellery. "You arranged the old gentleman's bedclothes during the night to form a human figure, as if he had done it himself. You threw some clothes of his in one of his suitcases, as if he had planned to flee. In fact, you arranged the whole thing to give the impression that Mr. Kagiwa, whose business I have no doubt is shaky—largely due to your peculations—had cut loose from his Occidental surroundings once and for all time, and vanished into



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the mysterious Orient from which he had come—with the remnants of his fortune. In this way there would be no body to look for, no murder, indeed, to suspect; and you yourself would escape the consequences of your crime of grand larceny. For you knew that, like all honorable and gentle men, your stepfather, who had given you everything, would forgive everything except your crime against honor. Had Mr. Kagiwa discovered your larceny, all would have been lost."

But Bill Gallent said nothing to these inexorable words; he was still staring out the window, where nothing more was to be seen except the quieting water. The rowboat, the stone, the suitcase, the dead body, the men had vanished.

And Ellery nodded at that paralyzed back with something like sad satisfaction.

"And the inheritance!" muttered Cooper. "Of course, he was the heir. Clever, clever."

"Stupid," said Ellery gently, "stupid. All crime is stupid."

Gallent said in the same dead voice, "I still think you were guessing about the door-stop being solid," as if he were engaged in a polite difference of opinion. Ellery was not fooled. His grip tightened on the automatic. The window was open, and the water might look inviting to a desperate man, for whom even death would be an escape.

"No, no," said Ellery, almost protesting. "Please give the devil his due. It was all obscure to me, you know, until on my way out I thought of the fact that the door-stop was made of soapstone. I knew soapstone to be fairly heavy. I knew the piece was almost perfectly regular in shape, and therefore admissible to elementary calculation. It was conceivable that I could test the accuracy of your statement that the door-stop was hollow. And so I came back and asked to consult an almanac. Once I had run across in such a reference-book a list of

the weights of common minerals. I looked up soapstones. And there it was."

"There what was?" asked Gallent, almost with curiosity.

"The almanac said that one cubic foot of soapstone weighs between 162 and 175 pounds. The door-stop was of soapstone; what were its dimensions? Six by six by twelve inches, or 432 cubic inches. In other words, one-quarter cubic foot. Or, by computing from the almanac's figures and allowing for the small additional weight of the shallow bas-relief dragons, the door-stop should weigh one-quarter of the cubic-foot poundage, which is forty-four pounds."

"But that's what the receipt said," muttered Cooper.

"Quite so. But what do those forty-four pounds represent? They represent that weight in solid soapstone! Mr. Gallent had said the door-stop was *not* solid, had a hollow inside large enough to hold fifty thousand dollars in hundred dollar bills. That's five hundred bills. Any space large enough to contain five hundred bills, no matter how tightly rolled or compressed, would make the total weight of the door-stop considerably less than forty-four pounds. And so I knew that the door-stop was solid, and that Mr. Gallent had lied."

Heavy feet tramped outside. Suddenly the room was full of men. The corpse of Jito Kagiwa was deposited on a divan, where it dripped quietly, almost apologetically, naked and yellow as old marble. Bill Gallent turned about, still frozen, and his eyes regarded the corpse—as if for the first time the enormity of what he had done had struck home.

Ellery took the heavy door-stop, glistening from the sea, from the hand of a policeman, and turned it over in his fingers. And he looked up at the wall and smiled in friendly fashion at the dragon, now obviously a pretty thing of silk and golden threads, and nothing more.

THE IDOL

(Continued from page 49)

myself if there wasn't some one else—some one older—she was interested in. That would account for everything—wouldn't it?"

The screen door opened before he could answer, and Corrie came out. She was carrying a tray with a pitcher and glasses. She placed it on the table and shrunk back a step. She was very pale, and her one thought seemed to be to avoid her mother's eyes. "I think I'll say good night and go upstairs now," she faltered, a note of panic in her voice, as she turned to grope for the knob of the screen door. "Will you both excuse me?" she asked.

"Put out the lights downstairs, dear, except in the hall," her mother called after her.

They sat silent until they heard her footsteps die away.

She needn't have expected any help from Corrie, Mrs. Bates reflected bitterly. As usual, everything depended on her own initiative—her tact.

She touched Horace's arm with her fan. "I don't suppose I ought to be telling you this. I wouldn't want you to think for a minute—Corrie is *most* reserved. But when we sit here sewing and gossiping

together about the friends we're really fond of, Corrie always says you are too busy a man to have time for marriage and a home. She says you'll probably always go on living where you do, in that one room up over your office, and getting your meals at the restaurant with all those railroad men. She says you're settled and contented as a bachelor. But I've never believed that!"

Mrs. Bates couldn't be sure that Horace Weatherby was listening to her. He still sat gazing into the hall where Corrie had vanished. The screen door had been closed quietly, decorously, but he looked as if it had been slammed in his face.

Slowly he drew his silk handkerchief out of his pocket and mopped his forehead. Then, after a moment, he turned to face her, and she saw how pale he was.

"Well—I'm not so settled I couldn't think of living differently," he admitted. "In fact—" He sat up, squaring his shoulders, and took a deep breath. "In fact, I'm thinking of it right now. Because I got a telegram last night. You remember that farm, Cora, that was left me out in Iowa, and that I've always had to pay taxes on? Well, it's just a bit of luck that

the town's growing so it wants a flying-field, and I've had an offer for my land. Enough to make it sensible for me to go out there and look it over. I was wondering—"

He paused. He seemed to be nerving himself for something that required great resolution.

Mrs. Bates kept her encouraging smile. "Corrie will be so glad!" she murmured.

A queer spasm passed over Horace's face. "Well, she'll have reason to be glad—for the money will come to her some day. That is, if you can fix things up first, you and I, so this turns out to have been her stepfather's good luck."

MRS. BATES sat perfectly still. She couldn't believe she had heard right.

"Now, don't pretend to be surprised, Cora. I've been calling here a good many years; and—say, you didn't think I was coming to see Corrie, did you?" He laughed unsteadily. "An old fellow my age? Why, she'd never look at me, with all these young fellows around. Of course not! I've—I've always known that. But I guess you and I can take this trip together as our honeymoon, and Corrie can ask your cousin Sarah Parker over on a visit, and then run the house here for a while to suit herself. She can even entertain her friends, if she wants to. It will be a good chance."

Honestly, Mrs. Bates could say she had never dreamed of such a thing! She had always been too absorbed in planning Corrie's future to remember she still had an existence of her own. No girl had ever had such a mother as Corrie was blessed with—devoted, unselfish, with no thought of being a rival! And yet—

The unexpected click of the gate, just then, startled her so that she dropped her fan. Footsteps were coming up the walk. They sounded young and determined.

She saw Ray Miller's dark head in the circle of light.

"Good evening, Mrs. Bates," he began. "As long as Mr. Weatherby is here to keep you company, I wondered if I couldn't take Corrie down to the Strand for the second showing of 'The Idol?'" "We don't need to stay through—we could be home before eleven o'clock."

Mrs. Bates sat amid whirling chintz cushions, whirling bouquets of gladioluses, whirling pitchers of lemonade—unable to move, unable to speak.

But Horace Weatherby got up. He looked taller, somehow, and oddly heroic as he advanced to the porch steps.

"You'll be apt to find me here a good many evenings from now on, my boy—keeping Corrie's mother company. So you two stay out as late as you want to. I'd like you to stay right through for the end of the film—specially for the last scene where that older fellow, the English colonel, lets himself be sacrificed to the idol in the heathen temple, so the young folks can go free and live happy afterward. Never mind about us—" He turned to Mrs. Bates; with a wave of his hand he indicated the pitcher of lemonade and the glasses. "Sha'n't we ask him up, Cora, to be the first to drink our health?"

But Mrs. Bates wasn't even listening to him. She was on her feet, tugging at the knob of the screen door, which always resisted her attempts to get it open.

"Corrie! . . . Cor-a-lee!" she gasped.

"Come back!

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EXACTLY THE RIGHT GIRL

(Continued from page 25)

"That's why," Red Brown said. "That's why I was so interested just now to see that the triple-threat girl had got the triple-threat halfback."

"What's a triple-threat girl?" Tom demanded.

"I guess that wasn't so bright," Red Brown said. "Just elaborate. All I meant was that she's pretty, and she's clever, and she has the backing of Tony di Silvento."

"What!" Tom said.

"You heard me," Red Brown said. "You don't suppose Bonnie Branleigh has been on the switchboard at the Hotel Granditon all her life, do you?"

"I don't know anything about Bonnie Branleigh," Tom said.

"I do," Red Brown said. "She was singing in a night-club in Chicago last summer. She was good, too. She only came up here a month or so ago, after the football season started. How do you figure that?"

"Perhaps she lost her job in Chicago," Red Brown said. "But it isn't likely that a girl who was making a hit would have no place to go if she lost her job. From the point of view of a girl who's worked in a Chicago night-club, this is a small town—this is the sticks."

Tom said nothing. Red Brown wasn't a wild man. He usually knew what he was talking about.

"You know who owns the place in Chicago?" asked Red Brown.

"No," Tom said.

"Tony di Silvento owns it."

"I see," Tom said, though he didn't see, really.

"Why don't you pull over to the curb and let me out," Red Brown said. "That's all I wanted to say you."

SO Tom stopped at the curb, and Red Brown got out.

"Listen, Red," Tom said. "What could they do? They wouldn't dare do Dick any harm."

"There isn't anything that Tony di Silvento wouldn't dare," Red Brown said. "But he's off the rough stuff. He always has been. His pride is that he's smooth. He wouldn't have Dick beaten up so he couldn't play. He wouldn't hire somebody to give him a Mickey Finn."

"They must know they couldn't bribe Dick. Even Tony di Silvento would know that."

"Yes, he would know that. Besides, Tony doesn't like bribery. It's too expensive."

"Then what could they do?"

"You're ignoring the obvious thing," Red Brown said. "You're ignoring the girl."

"You mean blackmail?"

"I mean the badger game."

Tom shook his head. "Don't be silly," he said. "Dick wouldn't throw Midatarka down—no matter what."

"No," Red Brown said.

"Then what could they do?" Tom asked. He was getting exasperated with Red Brown.

"That's what I'm asking you," Red Brown said. "What could they do? Be-

cause it looks as if they thought they could do something. You know Dick Holland better than anybody else. What could they do to keep him away from that game with State?"

"They'd have to kill him," Tom said.

"And that," Red Brown said, "is out."

"You've built up something out of nothing."

"I hope so," Red Brown said. "I wouldn't put it past me."

"You thought enough of it to tell me."

"I just thought I'd mention it," Red Brown grinned at Tom. "Didn't I say it was confidential?"

"No, you didn't."

"Then," Red Brown said, "I must have trusted to your discretion, mustn't I?"

"Go to hell," Tom said.

HE drove up the street. He had to go to lunch; he had to be on time for lunch. He wondered if he ought to tell Roley what Red Brown had said. But couldn't tell Roley until he'd talked to Dick. It would be tattling. And if Dick asked him not to say anything to Roley, he couldn't say anything to Roley. He'd have to talk to Dick. He'd have to ask him about Bonnie Branleigh. He'd have to warn Dick, and he'd have to do it in such a way that he wouldn't make everything worse. If he was as mad about the girl as he seemed to be, he wouldn't welcome the suggestion that she was doing what Tony di Silvento told her to do.

Tom had to wait for a chance to see Dick alone, and Dick disappeared after lunch. He was on time for the light practice. After practice, the squad went down to the train in a big bus. There were several hundred students and townspeople gathered at the station to see them off. But it was generally conceded that for once Midatarka would beat Illinois. The trains of student rooters weren't going down until the next morning. The team got away without having to listen to any speeches.

They had dinner on the train, and afterward they sat around the club-car. Tom sat down beside Dick. But he couldn't talk to Dick there. Dick picked up a Chicago evening paper and saw something that interested him and read. Tom saw that he was reading a story about the son of a rich family who had eloped with a model.

Dick looked up. "This is the kind of thing that gives me a pain," he said.

Tom waited.

"The idea that of course the son of a rich man who marries a model has married beneath him. What is a model? A girl who has to earn her own living, and who happens to be attractive enough to earn it by posing. And a rich man's son is nothing but a guy who doesn't have to work for a living. Why shouldn't he marry the model if she'll have him? What's all the fuss about?"

"Of course the girl may be the better of the two," Tom said. "But it's taken for granted that people with money and position have a background that's important to them. And if a man who has that background marries a girl who hasn't it, there's a barrier between them."

"It's taken for granted that the girl is a gold-digger," Dick said, "and that she's marrying him for his money."

"That happens," Tom said.

Dick smiled. "So the only way a man like me, whose family is well off, can be sure of being loved for himself alone is to marry a girl from a family as well off as his own."

"Your family has been well off for several generations," Tom said. "That means something."

"For instance?"

"You know as well as I do, Dick. The family has standards of honor and decency and—"

"So have lots of poor people," Dick interrupted.

"Your father and mother are cultivated people."

"I know they are," Dick said. "But I'm not. I've got better manners than most taxi-drivers, and the Psi Chi finish. But I'm no better educated."

"I think you are," Tom said.

"You know as well as I do, Tom," Dick said, "that I haven't learned anything in college. I've taken all the snap courses I could find, and you've pulled me through the others. What have I got that Jimmy the bootblack couldn't pick up in a year?"

"Jimmy will never learn to speak English correctly. He'll never learn to feel at home with people like your father and mother."

"A girl would, if she wanted to," Dick said. "I know a—I've known working-girls who have read all the books I ought to have read."

Tom noticed the slip and the correction. It was the nearest Dick had come to mentioning Bonnie Branleigh. Tom wondered if Dick knew that he knew that it was no abstract question they had been discussing but a personal one. Dick was asking himself whether he wanted to marry Bonnie. He seemed to have convinced himself that she would make a proper wife for a Holland. But he probably hadn't. He had advanced all the arguments for it and made light of all the arguments against it. But he wouldn't have talked at all if he had made up his mind. He was still selling himself the idea.

TOM saw Mike Roley's gray head and wide shoulders coming down the aisle. Mike Roley paused and put his hand on Tom's shoulder. His brown face was lined with minute and intricate wrinkles—the face of a man who has worked outdoors for years and years. Mike Roley could bark orders like a captain of Marines when he had to, but now he spoke in his usual low-pitched kindly voice.

"I think, Tom," he said, "that we'll have to keep Dick on the bench for the first half. We'll save him for the State game if the Illini will let us."

Tom nodded. Mike Roley had a way of talking to his men as if they were his equals. It was only when he felt that they had flatly disobeyed him that he became the implacable boss.

Tom got up and visited with the members of the squad. He was captain of the team. Roley counted on him to soothe this man's feelings and calm that one's nerves. Tom wished he could talk to Jane. But he couldn't talk to Jane—not really. He couldn't tell Jane the half of what he knew. It would break her heart.

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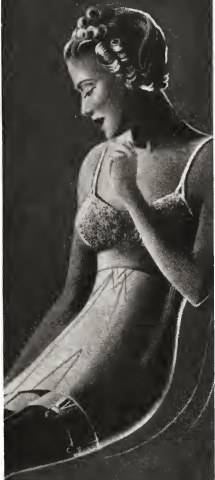
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He planned to make a chance to talk to Dick when they went up to the room they would share in the hotel. He had to. But when the time came, he found it impossible to bring up the subject gracefully. Dick had nothing to say as they undressed. Dick got into the other twin bed, and put his arm around the pillow, as he always did. He'd be asleep in another minute.

"Dick," Tom said, "there's something I've got to say to you. I think—"

"You mean you ought to speak to me about Bonnie," Dick said without turning his face or raising his head.

"Yes," Tom said.

"I'd skip it if I were you," Dick said. He sat up. "I don't mean to be nasty," he continued. "But I know the things you think you ought to say. I've thought of them—all of them."

"I'm not sure that you have," Tom said.

"All right," Dick said. "Shoot."

"Did you know that she used to sing in a night-club in Chicago?"

"That's where I met her," Dick said.

Tom stood there staring at Dick. He hadn't suspected that Dick had known the girl before she came to Granditon and got a job at the Granditon hotel.

"Do you know who owns that night-club?"

"There really isn't anything you can tell me about Bonnie," Dick said.

Tom reflected that this was undoubtedly true. Even if he knew that Bonnie was doing what Tony di Silvento had told her to do, he could never convince Dick of it. And he didn't know. He had only Red Brown's circumstantial evidence.

"What about Jane?" Tom said.

Dick opened his mouth to speak and shut it again.

Tom waited.

"I don't know," Dick said.

Still Tom waited.

"You think I haven't played square with Jane," Dick said. "You're right: I haven't. She doesn't know anything about Bonnie. And most of the time I hope she never will."

Still Tom waited.

"You've never been in love with two girls at once," Dick said.

"No," Tom said.

"Then you don't know what hell is," Dick said.

"If there's anything I can do—" Tom said.

"There isn't," Dick said. "It's my party."

"All right," Tom said.

Dick put his arm around the pillow again. Tom wasn't sure whether he went to sleep almost instantly or only pretended to. Tom himself was a long time going to sleep.

They avoided the subject next morning. They even avoided anything that might possibly lead to it.

MIKE ROLEY kept Dick on the bench for the whole first half. Midatarka played Illinois to a standstill that first half, but couldn't score. Roley sent Dick out when they began the second half. The ball seasawed near the middle of the field for almost ten minutes. Then, from his own fifty-yard line, Ole Oledon threw a thirty-yard pass to Dick. He was almost free when he caught the ball. He

dodged the Illinois safety man and went over for a touchdown. Bill Richards kicked the goal. The game was pretty safe, but they would have to have another touchdown to be certain. Dick got another chance in the middle of the fourth quarter. He got away and ran sixty-seven yards to a touchdown.

Tom Starbuck looked up at the Midatarka stands. They had gone wild, of course. The Midatarka band was playing "Hot Time." What could you do about a man like Dick Holland? The whole Illinois team was laying for him—had laid for him from the moment he came on the field. But he got away just the same. And when he got loose in a broken field nobody could catch him.

Mike Roley took Dick out as soon as they had that second touchdown and put Buddy Williams in. The Illini were discouraged. They had given everything they had to hold Midatarka in the first half. They couldn't hope to tie the game. Buddy Williams went over for a third touchdown.

Tom saw Dick talking to Mike Roley in the locker-room. Tom saw Mike Roley nod and pat Dick on the shoulder. Dick came over to where Tom sat on a bench. Tom crossed his arms and pulled at his wet jersey to get it over his head. He was tired. He had worked hard that day. He had worked hard for four quarters. That was what an end did—worked hard and blocked that tackle no matter how big and strong and fast he was. They only noticed an end when he made a mistake.

"Tom," Dick said, "I've just asked Mike if I could have dinner with my father and mother and drive back to Granditon with them. He says I can."

"Don't let your father and mother keep you out too late," Tom said.

THE train got into Granditon at eleven o'clock. Tom said good-night to the fellows in the house and went up to the rooms he shared with Dick, and went to bed but not to sleep. Dick came in after midnight. He didn't look as if it was hell to be in love with two girls at once. He looked happy. He had a spot of rouge in front of his left ear. He saw it in the mirror and wiped it off deliberately.

Tom thought of several dirty cracks. He thought of saying: "I understand now what you mean by hell." He thought of saying: "You must have enjoyed driving up from Champaign tonight with your father and mother."

But what was the use? He envied Dick. That was all he would be saying if he said the things he thought of saying.

"When," Tom asked, "—when do we finish getting up that history?"

"Let's make it Tuesday night," Dick said. "The quiz is Wednesday morning, so I won't have much time to forget what you tell me."

Tom slept late next morning. Dick woke him up. Dick was singing as he dressed. Tom thought again what hell it must be to fall in love with two girls at once. Dick was humming, "I'm in Love Again" as if he found it somehow endurable.

"Going out?" Tom said aloud.

Dick nodded and finished tying his tie. "For the day," he said.

Tom drove over to the Gamma Gamma house after lunch. It was a bright cold November afternoon. Jane Torrance said he needn't put the top of the roadster up. She'd wear a fur coat.

"I feel like riding miles and miles," she said as they started.

"And getting very hungry and having a good dinner," Tom said.

"Yes," she said.

He drove on, smiling in spite of himself. He couldn't feel sore on the world when he was with Jane.

"I hear there's a new place up the river that's good. They call it Emil's. You have to telephone in advance if you want dinner, but there won't be anybody else there."

Jane shook her head.

"I'd rather go to Johnny Miller's," Jane said.

"Have you ever been to Emil's?"

"No."

"Why not try it?"

"Can't I have a whim?" Jane asked.

"Of course," Tom said. "We'll go to Johnny Miller's."

FOR ten miles they drove without speaking. Tom had always thought the November landscape drear. He had seen a lot of it from the window of a railway train traveling with the team to and from games. The trees were bare of leaves; the fields were brown and dusty. But today it wasn't drear; today there was something in the air—something better than a drink.

"Besides," Jane said, at long last, "it isn't just a whim." She had to lean close and talk in his ear or else the gale coming over the top of the windshield would have taken the words out of her mouth. "I'll tell you later."

Tom nodded. . . .

They drove on and on, and only paused now and again to light a cigarette and exchange a word or two. They stopped toward dark to look at a road sign. The sign said, "Tomkinsville, 12 M." Johnny Miller's was a mile or two beyond Tomkinsville.

"It'll be full of people we know," Tom said.

"That's one reason I'd rather go there."

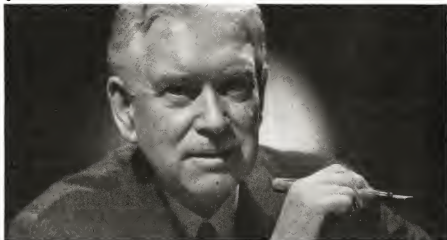
They drove to Johnny Miller's. The dining-room wasn't full of people they knew. There were only eight or ten students there. But Jane and Tom knew them all. Two of the girls were Gamma Gammas. Johnny Miller led them to a table in a corner. They ordered cocktails and a steak and things.

Jane twirled her glass idly by the stem, watching the circle the base made on the tablecloth when she pressed it down. She looked up at him under long lashes, so clear-eyed and so candid that he had to look away. He felt if he looked into her eyes another moment he'd do something foolish, such as taking her hand in his. He felt, looking into her eyes, as if there was something between them that neither of them had ever admitted in any other way. But even before she spoke, he knew it wasn't true. It was only something he wanted to believe.

"You're very soothing to the wounded feelings, Tom," she said. "You seem so safe and sane and sound. You're what they call a good guy."

"Moral," Tom said.

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Jane nodded. "Yes," she said.
"The bad boys get all the breaks," Tom said.

Jane dropped her eyes to her glass again. "I know how you feel," she said. "Because I'm good. At least, I'm too good. And it seems to me"—she raised her eyes with that same grave, candid look she had given him before—"That the bad girls get what they want."

The radio was bringing in a Chicago dance band. They were playing "I'm in Love Again." Tom remembered waking up that morning and hearing Dick humming that tune while he dressed. Tom knew he'd have to watch himself not to betray Dick by a chance word. He'd have to watch himself, because the impulse to tell Jane everything he knew was so strong. And it wouldn't do her any good. In the long run there could be no choice between a girl like Jane and a girl like Bonnie Branleigh. Dick might think he was in love with Bonnie, but he wasn't. He'd get over it. Jane would be happier if she never heard of Bonnie Branleigh.

"It isn't really true," Tom said, thinking of Bonnie. In the end she would be out on a limb.

The waiter brought steak; they ate it.

"I MIGHT as well come across," Jane began abruptly.
"If you want to."

"I want to awfully," Jane said. "I feel as if I could say things to you I couldn't say to anybody else. I feel that I don't have to pretend with you."

"I think you're safe with me," Tom said.

"When you fall in love, you do nothing but pretend," Jane said. "You try so hard all the time to make yourself a lot better than you are."

"Yes," Tom said.

Jane looked up at him again. Jane looked away. Jane took a quick breath. "I wish you'd tell me all about Bonnie Branleigh," she said.

"What?" Tom said.

"You don't have to pretend with me," Jane said. She must have seen how startled he was. "Of course if Dick has confided in you, why you'll have to be careful. I'm not asking you to betray confidences."

"I—I—" Tom began.

"He has confided in you," Jane said. "Of course he has. You know him better than anybody else does."

"I suppose I do know him better than anybody else does," Tom said slowly. "And yet there are times when I feel as if I didn't know him at all."

He would never understand how Dick could spend one hour with Bonnie that he might have spent with Jane.

"I don't understand him," Jane said. She knitted her brows and spoke with wisdom. "Falling in love with a man is no way to understand him."

They both laughed at that, and felt better for being able to laugh.

"I didn't know," Tom said, "that you knew anything about Bonnie Branleigh."

"I haven't heard anything about her from Dick," Jane said. "But—after all, I'm a Gamma Gamma. If there is anything the Gamma Gammas don't know about what is going on at Midatarka, it must have happened since this noon. They

know that Dick calls me up twice a day, but that I almost never see him any more. They know he spends every minute he can with Bonnie Branleigh. They know I'm having a date with you. And you may be sure they can put two and two together well enough to guess that I wanted to talk to you about Dick."

"I needn't have called for you at the Gamma house this afternoon," Tom said. "I could have met you somewhere else, and we could have gone to a place where we wouldn't see anybody we knew."

"They have known just the same. They get around a lot. And Granditon is full of Gammas who've married Granditon men, and who are always dropping in with the latest gossip. So it's much simpler to be perfectly open. At least you don't emphasize what you're doing by trying to conceal it and not succeeding."

"I feel simple-minded—no to have thought of all this," Tom said.

"Why should you bother about gossip? You have nothing to conceal."

He had a lot to conceal. He wondered now if any of these people suspected that he was in love with Jane.

"I didn't want to go to Emil's," Jane said, "because I think that's where Dick took Bonnie this afternoon. I was afraid it would be embarrassing. I wouldn't want to make a scene—or anything."

"You never would," Tom said.

"I might have burst into tears," Jane said. "But here"—she nodded toward the dance floor where the two Gamma Gammas were dancing with their young men—"with my sorority sisters watching me, I can be perfectly calm about it—all about everything."

Jane leaned toward him across the table. "Now will you tell me about Bonnie Branleigh?"

"You probably know more about her than I do," Tom said.

"I only know that she was singing in a night-club in Chicago—that's where Dick first met her—and that she's much prettier than I am, and that she has one of those husky voices men seem to like."

"She's a pretty girl. But she isn't prettier than you are."

"I've seen her."

"Then you ought to know that you're prettier—in a nicer way."

"It's sweet of you to say I'm prettier—but I don't really like the other part. I don't want to be so damned nice."

"You can't help yourself, Jane. You just are nice."

"So are you," Jane retorted.

THE waiter, bringing coffee, interrupted them. Jane found a cigarette. Tom lit it for her.

"What I really want to know," she said, "is whether this girl is the sort you'd think a night-club singer would be—you know what I mean."

"Tough," Tom said.

"Yes," Jane said. "Or is she the sort of girl Dick could marry—happily."

"I don't know," Tom said. "I've never seen her except at a distance. I've never talked to her—beyond answering the telephone when she called up."

"What do you think?" Jane insisted. "I've already told you I don't know." Tom said. "I've taken it for granted that she's no better than she should be. But I don't know."

"I want to know," Jane said. She leaned toward and looked at him again with grave candid eyes. "Because if I thought she was the kind of girl he could be happy with—I wouldn't try to get him back."

Tom smiled to himself, remembering how many times he had heard a girl say that about Dick in circumstances that were, essentially, the same as these.

Jane saw his smile. "Oh," she cried, "I know how that sounds. But I mean it."

"I know you mean it," Tom said. He knew she thought she meant it.

"I wish you knew," Jane said. "I wish you even had a hunch."

HE wondered if he ought to tell her what Red Brown had said about Tony di Silvento and Bonnie Branleigh.

"What 1—1—" Jane said, then hesitated. "What I really want to ask and am pretending not to is—are they having an affair?"

"You only bring that up because you're jealous."

"Because," Jane said, "we didn't." "I don't know whether they are or not," Tom said.

"And you wouldn't tell me if you did know."

"I couldn't tell you if I did know," Tom said.

"I think they are," Jane said. "I think that's the answer."

Tom thought she was right. But he did not want to say so. He wanted to change the subject. Some other band was playing "I'm in Love Again" for the radio.

"Would you dance, Jane?" he asked.

"I'd love to," Jane said.

They had danced together before at all the Psi Chi dances Dick had taken her to. But it had always been a formality. He hadn't danced with her often, because she was Dick's girl. This was somehow different, even though she was with him because she wanted to talk about Dick. He let himself dance with her as if he liked dancing with her. The difference was subtle, but she knew it.

"Oh, Tom," she said, when the dance was over, "that was grand! And my Gamma Gamma sisters were watching us, and wondering if after all I only made a date with you to find out something about Dick."

"We'll do it again," Tom said. "But there is something I've been holding out on you, and that I think maybe I'd better tell you."

"Don't tell me if you think you oughtn't."

"Well—" Tom said.

"I take it back," Jane interrupted. "I'm not so noble. I want to know everything there is to know, whether you think you ought to tell me or not."

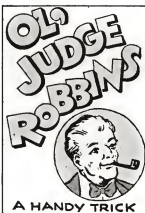
Tom told her all about his talk with Red Brown.

"So," she said when he had finished, "You think she's just taking Dick for a ride."

"I don't know anything I haven't told you."

"It looks that way," Jane said. "But what could they do?"

"I don't know," Tom said. "All they'd have to do would be make him late, and Mike Roley wouldn't let him play."



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"People like that wouldn't know about Mike Roley. They couldn't imagine a coach who would keep his best halfback on the side-lines for being late."

"Who knows what they know?" Tom asked.

"We don't know," Jane said. "We can only guess."

"Let's dance," Tom said.

"Let's," Jane said.

THEY danced until nearly ten o'clock. They had to quit then, so that Jane could get back to the Gamma Gamma house by eleven o'clock. They had forty miles to drive. They drove it without speaking, and reached the Gamma Gamma house by ten minutes after eleven. There were roadsters parked on both sides of the streets, full of Gamma Gammas and their boy friends saying good-night.

"You'll never know how good it was for me to be with you today," Jane said.

"You were good to be with," Tom said. "But we didn't settle anything."

"No," Jane said. "It takes time to make up your mind,—to know how you truly feel,—once something unexpected happens. But you've helped—you've helped a lot. You were so awfully nice to me."

"It isn't hard to be nice to you."

"At least," Jane said. "I didn't cry. I won't cry—except a little when I'm alone—going to sleep. I don't know whether my heart is broken, or I only like to think it is."

"He'll come back to you," Tom said.

"You believe that."

"Absolutely," Tom said.

Jane was silent for a moment, thinking. "Gee," she said, "if he does—what a fight we'll have!"

Tom saw that the Gamma Gammas were getting out of cars and walking toward the front door. Jane saw them too.

"I've got to go, Tom," she said. "I'm supposed to set a good example to the freshmen."

He jumped out and gave her his hand. He wanted to kiss her good-night, but he did not know he made any gesture toward it.

"Yes," she said, "do."

He took her tenderly in his arms. His lips brushed hers.

"You're a darling," she said, and released herself.

He wondered, driving home, whether she had done it out of loneliness—out of longing for Dick—or out of a friendly feeling toward him. It was probably both. And she couldn't have been unaware that several Gamma Gammas would see it. He didn't blame her for that. It must be tough to live in a sorority house where you've been tops, and have twenty or thirty of your sisters trying to be kind to you because you've been deserted for a girl who used to sing in a night-club. . . .

There was a car parked near the Psi Chi house. Red Brown was sitting in it.

"I've been waiting for you," he said.

"Do you know any more than you did last Friday?"

Tom shook his head.

"Neither do I," Red Brown said. "I have a hunch. They won't do anything until the last minute. If Dick Holland were to break a collar-bone in practice

so he couldn't play Saturday, it wouldn't do them any good. The papers would print it, and the odds on Midatarka would go down, and they couldn't make a killing. What they want is something they can be sure of, but that no one else will know about until they've got their bets taken."

"That's logical enough," Tom said. "If they are going to do anything at all, they would do it that way. But I don't believe they're going to do anything about it. I think you're so in love with the idea that you're selling yourself on it. Such things don't happen."

"Maybe," Red Brown said. "Maybe I'm just a little boy seeing things in the dark. And then again maybe I'm a hard-boiled newspaper guy that's been around and knows some of the answers."

"What kind of a girl is Bonnie Branleigh?" Tom asked.

"Just a beautiful society girl out seeing what life is like," Red Brown said.

"You mean you think she's tough."

"Yes," Red Brown said, "of course."

"But you don't know. You don't know one damned thing about her, except that she was singing in a night-club, and that now she's on the switchboard at the Granditon Hotel and playing around with Dick Holland."

"No," Red Brown said. "For all I could prove in court, she's a girl who tells her mother everything."

"It might be a good idea to know," Tom said more hotly than he intended.

"Don't get sore," Red Brown said. "It isn't the first time a good Psi Chi has fallen for a girl he wouldn't introduce to his mother. Some like 'em tough."

It was only afterward, when he was drifting off to sleep and dreaming about a girl whose candid eyes looked straight into his, saying the things he wanted them to say, that Tom knew why he had got mad at Red Brown. He wanted to believe that Bonnie was all right. If she was all right, Dick might never have that fight with Jane Torrance, and make up.

ON Monday morning Tom sat in the back row of the philosophy lecture-room staring at Jane Torrance as he had on the previous Friday. But this time he did not listen even part of the time to what the bright young professor was saying. He waited, hearing nothing, for the hour to be over.

He got up at exactly the right moment. He met Jane in the doorway. His arm touched hers. And then they were in the sunny corner.

"Dick called me up this morning," Jane said. "He said he wanted to see me as soon as he could, but he didn't know when he could, what with classes and football practice and signal-drill and the history quiz he's getting ready for. It's getting weird."

"He doesn't know you know anything about Bonnie Branleigh?" Tom said.

"Even so," Jane said, "what's the big idea?"

"It's simple enough," Tom said. "He doesn't want to give either of you up."

Tom told her about his meeting with Red Brown after he had left her at the Gamma Gamma house, and she said what they ought to do was to tell Mike Roley all about it, only they couldn't betray Dick.

Tom felt disappointed afterward. He had expected something. He had expected she'd be flirtatious. He hadn't any reason to expect she would be. But he was disappointed when she wasn't. He knew she was in love with Dick. He knew she was eating her heart out waiting for Dick to come back.

Tom didn't see her again that day or the next. He worked from eight o'clock Tuesday night until four o'clock Wednesday morning stuffing Dick with history. He sat again through a lecture in philosophy staring at Jane.

"WHAT'S happened?" Jane asked when they reached their corner.

"Nothing," Tom said.

"He calls me up, but he doesn't come around."

"He had a good excuse last night," Tom said.

"Yes," Jane said. "And he'll have a good excuse Thursday night. He'll have to go to the student mass-meeting and sit on the platform. But what's the matter with tonight?"

Tom was going to ask her what was the matter with spending an hour with him after the evening signal-practice, but before he could speak, she went on:

"I shall sit in the Gamma Gamma house all evening," she said, "waiting for the telephone."

After that he couldn't ask her to go somewhere with him.

The philosophy class came again on Friday morning. Tom was there early in the back row. But Jane didn't come in. He waited, hoping she was merely late. But she didn't come at all. He could only guess that she was with Dick. They were having that fight. . . .

He saw Dick at lunch. Dick seemed preoccupied. He disappeared as usual after lunch. He came to the light practice, hardly more than a signal-drill, that they got the day before a game. Dick seemed much more himself.

Mike Roley's voice got softer and softer as he worked with them on the plays that were to turn Dick Holland loose the next afternoon against State. You had to know Mike Roley to know how anxious he was. His voice got softer and gentler because he was bound not to get impatient, not to lose his temper, not to show how much he cared.

Tom got out of the shower and into his clothes as fast as he could, and drove back to the Psi Chi house. He couldn't wait any longer. He ran upstairs and shut the door of the rooms he shared with Dick, and called the Gamma Gamma house. Jane wasn't there.

Tom put up the phone. She couldn't be with Dick. He had just left Dick in the locker-room. There would be no signal-practice. There would be nothing until eleven o'clock tomorrow morning.

Tom went down to dinner. Dick came in five minutes late. He went out after dinner. Tom went upstairs and called the Gamma Gamma house again. Jane wasn't there. He called the Gamma Gamma house every hour until eleven, and each time some weary Gamma Gamma freshman told him that Miss Torrance wasn't in. He couldn't call after eleven.

Tom went to bed. The telephone jingled. He jumped for it.



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"Listen," Red Brown said, "will you watch that guy tomorrow morning?"

"Yes," Tom said, "I will."
"You won't let him go anywhere unless you go along?"

"No," Tom said.
"That's all I ask," Red Brown said.
Tom went back to bed. In time he went to sleep. He came wide awake at seven o'clock, to the sound of an alarm clock. Dick was smothering the clock.
"I'm sorry," Dick said. "But I wish you'd wake up too. I'm getting married this morning, and I want you to be my best man."

Tom sat up. "What's that?" he asked.
"I'm getting married," Dick repeated.
"And I want you to go with me."
"What's the hurry?" Tom demanded.
"We've got to be back here by twelve o'clock," Dick said. "You know that."
"Why get married this morning? What's the matter with tomorrow or next week or next June?"

"I've got to get it all settled before the family finds out about it. They can't do much about it after it's done. And Bonnie is scared."

"You're marrying Bonnie Branleigh?" Tom said.

"Of course," Dick said.
Tom got out of bed.
"I know what you think," Dick said.
"You think she's a little tramp. It's true that night club she sang in was pretty tough. She knows the tough lingo—she can make it very funny when she wants to. But she's fine. She's exactly the kind of girl I ought to marry. And I love her."

Tom thought he sounded as if he had really made up his mind about a girl at last.

"I hope you don't mind going along," Dick said. "Because Bonnie is scared. The fellow who owned the club is Tony di Silvento, and she has seen two of his men around town this last week. She thinks they might try some rough stuff on me so I couldn't play this afternoon and they'd make a killing. I don't think they're as tough as she imagines. But if they are, they won't dare take on the two of us."

"I'm with you," Tom said.
He wondered if Dick had seen Jane. But he could not ask Dick now.

"I wish you knew some girl you could bring along," Dick said. "I think Bonnie would like it if there were some other girl along."

"I don't know any girl I would trust," Tom said, "except Jane Torrance."

Dick turned and stared at him and smiled. "All right," he said. "It seems—it seems— But why not?"

TOM reached the Gamma Gamma house at twenty-five minutes after seven. He got no answer to his ring at the front door, so he went around the house to the kitchen. He told the cook she'd have to call Miss Torrance. The cook said it was Saturday morning and everybody was asleep. Tom said it was a matter of life and death. They had an argument. But the cook yielded and went upstairs. Jane came down a moment later in pajamas.
"Jane," Tom said, "I've got bad news. Dick wants to get married this morning to Bonnie Branleigh, and I can't think of any way of stopping him."

"Why stop him?" Jane said. "Let's help him. I'll be down in five minutes."

"Why didn't you say it was a wedding in the first place?" the cook demanded, hustling about the kitchen, getting coffee and rolls and butter.

JANE was down in six minutes. The cook stood over Jane and Tom while they ate a hot buttered roll and drank a cup of coffee. They got to the Grandition as Bonnie Branleigh came out of the hotel with Dick. She was very slender in a dark blue suit, and very pale. When she saw Jane, her face broke into a smile of sudden delight.

"Oh," she said, in her slightly husky voice, so much lower pitched than you expected, "how sweet of you! Dick told me you were one of the best."

Jane threw both arms around her and kissed her.

"Follow us," Dick said. "We're going to Nefferton Junction, and the minister is waiting."

Nefferton Junction was only thirty-five miles away, but it had the merit of being across the State line where you could get married without waiting five days after you applied for a license.

Tom had to hold the gas pedal down against the floor-boards to keep Dick and Bonnie in sight. The engine roared as he gave it all it would take, and the rush of wind coming over the shield took his hat off, and sent it swirling aloft and out of sight. Jane said something he couldn't hear in the roar and the rush. He motioned her closer. Jane cupped a hand around his right ear and talked into it.

"I said 'Isn't she sweet?'" Jane said.
Tom shook his head impatiently. "Talk about us," he yelled out of the corner of his mouth. He couldn't turn and talk into Jane's ear. He needed both hands on the wheel and his eyes on the road. He had to yell. "Where were you yesterday?"

"Big emotional scene at Gamma Gamma yesterday morning," Jane said in his ear. "Hysterical mother—wild Gamma Gamma freshman. I'm president of the chapter. I had to stick around."

"I called you up five times last night," Tom yelled.

"We all went to Mabel Murchison's for dinner and more talk afterward. Mabel is an old Gamma Gamma. I didn't get home till after midnight."

"I thought you were with Dick," Tom yelled.

The car was swaying and swinging at better than seventy miles an hour, and Dick and Bonnie were disappearing around the next curve. He had to keep his foot down against the floor-boards and both hands on the wheel.

"We'll have to wait to talk," Jane said. "We're going to a wedding now."

"I can hear what you say," Tom yelled.

"But I want to hear what you say," Jane said.

She took her hand away from his ear and settled back. Tom sat there grimly holding the car on the road and trying to figure it all out.

"Your heart isn't broken," he yelled. Jane put her hand on his ear. "I'll tell you all about it later," she said.

They roared into Nefferton Junction. Dick had evidently been there before. Dick had the license in his pocket. He

even had a ring. The service was brief, but somehow solemn. When it was over Bonnie turned to Jane. She put her arms around Jane's neck and cried a little on Jane's shoulder, and looked up with a smile of complete happiness shining through her tears.

"On to Emil's," Dick said.

"That's way up in the wilds," Tom protested. "It's forty miles from Granditon."

"They've got to go to Emil's, Tom," Jane said. "Don't you see they have? That's where they've been going together. That's the place they love."

Tom tried again to talk to Jane on the way to Emil's. But he had to drive so fast, in order to keep up with Dick and Bonnie, that Jane told him to wait. Jane seemed perfectly content to wait.

EMIL had the wedding breakfast ready, and a bottle of champagne on ice. "Bonnie thinks we were followed," Dick said. "But I'm sure she was mistaken."

"I hope so," Bonnie said.

Tom stole glances at his watch. They had to leave by eleven o'clock in order to reach Granditon by twelve, and twelve was the last minute. Nobody else seemed to care what happened until Bonnie suddenly rose to her feet, her face pale.

"I heard a motorcycle," she said.

She started toward the door. Dick and Tom ran toward the door. Tom saw a fellow at his car. He had the hood up. Tom started for him and, as he started, the man threw something, as you'd throw a stone, far out into a field.

The fellow ran for his motorcycle then. He jumped on it, and the motor roared as Tom hit him in a tackle that would have stopped any halfback who ever went down a field. They struck in a heap all mixed up with the motorcycle.

"Look out, Dick," Bonnie screamed. "The rat's got a rod."

The rat didn't have the rod long. Tom choked him with one hand while Dick took his gun away from him. Tom got up, and wiped his hand across his face.

"You're cut, Tom," Jane cried. She pressed her handkerchief hard above his eye to stop the blood.

"He's thrown away the rotor from the distributor head," Tom said.

He had done the same thing to Dick's car. Emil's car had gone to Granditon for supplies.

"I'll telephone," Dick said. He handed the gun to Bonnie.

"You know I'll shoot, Valenti," Bonnie said.

Valenti was a grimy boy of nineteen or twenty. He looked appealingly at Bonnie, but he did not speak.

Dick came running back. He looked up at the house. They all looked up. The telephone-wire was sagging. It had been cut.

"Can you ride a motorcycle, Tom?" Dick asked.

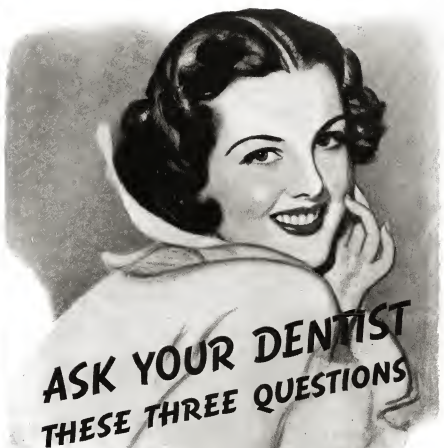
"I don't know," Tom said. "I never tried."

"I never did, either," Dick said.

"You can't do it if you've never learned," Valenti said.

"Be quiet," Bonnie said. "I can ride a motorcycle. I grew up on motorcycles."

"You can't take but one of us."



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"It'll have to be you, Dick," Tom said. "You can get there in time, and you mean so much more to the team."

"But it's my party," Dick said. "It's my fault."

Bonnie handed the gun to Tom. "Don't trust him," she said. "I know him and his kind."

She took the motorcycle by the handlebars, and raised it with an effort and threw one leg over the saddle. Her skirt was too narrow.

"Angel," Bonnie said to Dick, "tear my skirt so I can ride."

Dick took the hem of her skirt in both hands and tore it.

Bonnie kicked the starter and as the motor roared again she motioned to Dick to swing on behind.

"We'll send somebody to get you," Bonnie cried, and gave the motor the gas.

The motorcycle shot away with a sound like a machine-gun, and went careening down the road with Dick hanging on to the pillion behind Bonnie.

Tom stood holding the gun on Valenti with one hand and pressing Jane's handkerchief against the cut above his right eye with the other. He looked at the watch on his wrist. It was nearly half-past eleven. Grandison was forty miles away. But Dick would make it on that motorcycle. He'd send a car back. Mike Roley would be furious with the captain of the team for being late on the day of the biggest game of the season, but he would listen to reason. He looked at Jane. She looked somewhat scared.

"Now do we talk?" Tom asked. "How can we," Jane said, "with him listening?"

"I don't care what he hears," Tom said. "I want to know what's happened. I told you I tried to get you on the phone five times last night."

Jane stood close beside him. "What did you want to tell me?" she asked.

"I wanted to tell you I love you. I've always loved you—ever since that first house-party Dick brought you to. And I couldn't do anything about it because he was my best friend."

"Wasn't he your friend last night?" Jane asked.

"I didn't care if he was," Tom said. "I saw Dick Thursday night," Jane said.

"Did you have the big fight?" "No," Jane said. "He only talked about Bonnie and how much in love he was. What was there to fight about?"

"Love," Tom said. "I thought—"

"I haven't been in love with him for a long time," Jane said. "I would have got up my nerve to tell him if he hadn't fallen for Bonnie and stood me up. I have my vanity, and it wasn't so good having the whole Gamma Gamma chapter trying to hold my hand because my boyfriend had left me flat. I wanted to get even with him."

"Why didn't you?"

"How could I? He was so much in love with Bonnie. And besides—" Jane paused.

"Besides what?"

"Besides, I was crazy about you, and I thought you liked me. I thought you liked me—even if you didn't kiss me when I asked you to Sunday night."

"I did kiss you," Tom said.

"Not so you could notice it," Jane said.

"You ducked it."

"Valenti," Tom said to the grimy boy who stood apart waiting to be taken off to jail, "beat it."

Valenti looked at him, wondering if he meant it.

"Beat it," Tom repeated.

Valenti turned and ran toward the woods.

Tom took Jane in his arms.

"That," she said breathlessly, after a minute or two, "that was what I meant Sunday night."

They were standing there with their arms around each other when a car came into the yard.

"Cut it," Red Brown yelled. "Cut it and jump in."

Mike Roley was angry. But he couldn't stay angry after that last quarter, when Dick finally got loose. A man had no business to get married the morning before a big game. But if he made the winning touchdown, what could you say?

MAID OF MONEY

(Continued from page 46)

He looked up; he was losing her clear outlines in the dark.

"There're more stars," he said.

"Yes."

"It's clear. There'll be no 'husbandry in heaven' tonight. Their candles all are being lit."

"A heavy summons," Joan continued, quoting.

"Lies like lead upon me," he finished it.

"That's my summons to return to my work. I know I shouldn't say it is heavy; but tonight, it certainly is." He was trying again to see her in the gathering darkness. This was unsatisfactory, and he looked up again.

"One seldom or never notices stars in the city," he said. "That's another reason, I suppose, that one loses sense of proportion there. What do you and I really count?"

"When you and I—" began Joan, testing him again.

"Beyond the veil have passed?" he said. "Is that what you mean?"

She nodded: "Oh, what a long, long while this world shall last!"

"Omar," he said, "believed that therefore each one should seize for himself—and herself—what happiness he could. Omar was sure of it."

"But you?" asked Joan.

"It is a pagan philosophy," Alan said. "I'm afraid that to feel it fully, you have to be born to it."

"And not to?"

"The burden of duty."

"And ambition," Joan said.

"Yes; to that too."

"Group ambition with duty, and we were born alike, then, Alan."

"But how could your ambition ever keep company with my duty?"

"I wonder, often, what my ambition really is worth? What do you honestly think, Alan?"

He evaded that. "I've wondered often—especially today, Joan—what my duty really accomplishes. Do I actually make any of my people—I mean the poor souls who come to me—less wretched?"

"You know that you do!"

"I never doubted that as much as today. . . . I've wished a thousand times I could be a money-maker."

"Another one?" was all Joan said.

"What do you mean by that?"

"I mean, I work for one. You know him. He moved me into his office; and I got myself moved back to where I'd been. But before I left on Friday, I was told that on Monday I'm to be moved into his own office again. He's a very, very great money-maker. What would I care if I never saw him again?"

ALAN thrust his paddle into the water and swung the canoe into a narrow shallow cove where it lodged against the bank, steady and secure. Joan lay still, watching him and waiting for him to turn to her; but he gazed at the dark screen of the trees.

"What is it?" she asked at last.

"Is somebody there?"

"There's a path near the river; but it's not much used."

"I thought I heard some one."

They both listened.

"If it was anybody, he's gone by," Joan said. "It might have been merely some animal."

She sank back, waiting to learn what he meant to do or say. She was quivering.

"I like the quiet of this place," he said, his voice low and none too steady. "I like the peace of this place—with you."

"I'm glad you do," she managed to say.

"Any place would be peaceful to me—with you. But what would my place be to you?"

"I really live in New York now almost as much as you do," Joan replied.

"But quite differently."

"Not so differently!" she denied.

"Oh, yes; you see, even when you're away from it, you really have this home—your family, your position. Even when you leave it, it's part of you. I—I am no more than myself, wherever I may be."

"Yourself seems a very great deal to me. Besides, this big place of ours—my home—it may not be ours," she whispered, "much longer."

"That's true, Joan?"

"That's true."

"Still, that would not change you; it would stay your scale of life, which you must be bound to look for."

"From my husband, you mean? No; no, I would not."

"You mean by that, Joan, you—"

She realized he was reaching toward her; he was groping for her in the dark; and she lay very still, quivering but making no other move, waiting for his hands to find her.

In the leaves beside them, something stirred.

"What was that?" Alan whispered, drawing back.

"The animal we heard before," Joan said.

"Reverend!" croaked a voice through the leaves.

Joan sat up abruptly.

"Reverend!" croaked the voice again. "Reverend, I'm here."



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"Tolly?" Alan answered now. "Tolly?"

"Yes, Reverend. . . I'm late, Reverend. You took the train; I had to work the thumb. But I got here."

"Yes, you got here, Tolly," Alan agreed. "Some one you know, Alan?" Joan whispered. "Some one followed you?"

"He followed me," Alan told her, and stepped from the canoe. He bent down and helped Joan out.

Tolly was short and stocky, as Joan made him out in the darkness. Tolly was asthmatic and wheezy. He recounted in great detail, and between pauses to catch his breath, how he had "hitched" his way through the day from New York City, how he had triumphed to arrive at Darleith, located the house and gained the information that "the Reverend" was down at the river.

"Tolly," Alan explained to Joan, "is a most faithful friend."

Tolly was a bit "touched," Joan realized as the little man's words poured throughout their walk back to the house.

The light revealed him pale, pitiful, old, with faint blue eyes under white shreds of brows. His nose, long ago broken, was askew, and his lips had been torn and were twisted by the scars that had formed when they healed. It was too plain that he had no tie in life but to the mission—to Alan.

"Yes; I'm going back to the city," Alan reassured him. "I'm going with you back to the city."

Joan had with Alan a few minutes alone, before he went; but it was mere parting. The moment on the river was not to be regained then.

Joan lay awake nearly till dawn. Over and over she thought: "What would he have said, and what would I have done, if that crazy little man had not followed him—if Tolly had not come?" And she asked herself again and again: "Is Alan glad or sorry now, that he could go no further?"

Chapter Ten

IT was one of those crowded mornings which used to thrill Bartlow when the New York Transocean Investment Trust was still an undernourished infant, and which slightly annoyed him now when every about-to-default concern was trying its best to get taken over by the New Miracle Boy of Wall Street.

People, all sorts of people, were ushered in by Thomas, and were talking nineteen to a dozen without the slightest regard for truth or their reluctant audience.

A publisher whose magazines had been going from bad to worse for the past five years wanted two million dollars. Two million dollars—just like that! He didn't want to deal with the banks, he said, because the bankers lacked imagination.

An owner of a chain of grocery stores, well and unfavorably known for his tendency to sell canned goods below cost, expected Mr. Bartlow to become interested in a new brand of mayonnaise. There was plenty of money in mayonnaise, he claimed—at least five million dollars. But the trick was to find some one who would be willing to stake him to a miserly sum of two hundred thousand dollars.

A would-be manufacturer of trailers painted a rosy picture of a nation sleeping in trailers. Of the one hundred and twenty-five million Americans, he shouted, at least ten million would be certain to buy trailers. That was the country's future—that and nothing else. Roosevelt or no Roosevelt, the God-fearing, honest citizens needed trailers. So, how about it? He himself had no money, but by Jove, he had ideas. And his ideas were well worth a carload of dollars.

A gentleman from Florida felt that the time was opportune to put Miami and Palm Beach out of business. If Bartlow would only listen to him for ten minutes, he would become the uncrowned King of Winter Resorts. This caller talked for forty minutes. He brought along a bunch of maps and blueprints. It seemed that he owned twenty thousand acres of what he described as "paradise," and what turned out to be marshes.

A theatrical manager whom Bartlow had met by accident, and who succeeded in bluffing his way past Thomas, was about to stage the world's greatest extravaganza. Nothing as puny as Billy Rose's "Jumbo"—but a really colossal show: elephants and lions and tigers and alligators and the rest of the stuff.

"What stuff?" Bartlow asked wearily. "Oh, you know—wild animals and beautiful girls."

"I know," said Bartlow, and got up.

HE rang for Thomas.

"I've had enough for today," he said. "I'm not in to anyone. Send them all away. Tell them I'm sick. Tell them I'm dead. Tell them anything you want, but leave me alone."

Instead of going out, Thomas came closer to the desk and stood still, staring at Bartlow.

"What's the matter with you, Thomas? Didn't you hear what I just said? I want to be alone. That goes for you, too."

"I understand, sir, but—"

The little fellow stopped short. Whatever it was that he wanted to say, he evidently lacked courage.

"Anything wrong?"

Thomas shook his head.

"Then what are you standing here for?"

"It's only—it's only that Mrs. Bartlow is in the outer office. . . . She says she must see you."

"Mrs. Bartlow! You mean Alice? Why, that's impossible; she's in Paris."

"She arrived last night on the *Normandie*—traveled under an assumed name."

"I see."

Bartlow went to the window. He stood there silently for several minutes, looking at the familiar panorama below. There, right across the street, was the building that used to house Hartinger & Co. He had met Alice there for the first time in his life. Two blocks away was the Subtreasury. Would he ever forget the afternoon when Winford Paynton had stood in front of his window staring at the Christmas tree in front of the Subtreasury, and trying to think up ways and means of getting hold of Bartlow's money? Ways and means. . . . Bartlow wondered whether his former employer, tricky as he was, could have suspected on that occasion that his own daughter was to provide those ways and means.

"What does she want, Thomas?"

"I don't know, sir. She simply said she must see you. She claims it's business."

"Business!"

Bartlow smiled bitterly. Chances were, she wanted more money.

"Show her in."

His heart was galloping. He hadn't seen Alice since that night, seven months ago, when she got up in the middle of the dinner and left the house to sail for France. He wondered how she looked now. He hated himself for his inability to suppress his interest in her appearance. He knew that he should hate her; but instead, he hated himself. Why couldn't she have stayed in France for at least a year? Why did she have to disturb him again—just at the moment when he was becoming interested in Joan Darleith?

BARTLOW heard the familiar light steps, the steps of a beautiful woman who walked as if she weighed nothing.

"May I come in, George?"

As usual, there was a vague promise of caresses in her husky voice. What diabolical irony it was, that a creature like Alice should have been given that voice!

"You are in, aren't you?" he said icily, still standing with his back to her.

"Same old George—clear, concise, always to the point. . . . May I see your face, or do the by-laws of the New York Transoceanic Investment Trust prevent visitors from viewing it?"

He turned his head slowly.

She was wearing a simple black sports-dress with short sleeves. No jewelry, no ornaments of any description—nothing to interfere with the radiance of her blonde hair and white skin. Even her wide-brimmed black hat seemed to serve as a mere background for her eyes and face.

"How do I look, George?"

She straightened her shoulders, and walked slowly in front of him with the gait of a Fifth Avenue mannequin, her small firm breasts clearly outlined under her thin dress of some silky material.

"You look much better than you act," he said, turning his head away.

"Now, George—what could you possibly mean?"

"You know damn well what I mean: That interview you gave to those mud-slingers."

"I was trapped into it, George; honestly, I was."

"I suppose you were trapped likewise into getting your divorce in Paris instead of Lille or Dijon."

"I can explain that too, George."

"You can explain everything, but I'm not interested in your explanations. What brings you here, anyway?"

"Ah," she laughed, "wouldn't you like to know!"

She had seated herself nonchalantly; had produced a lipstick and a compact out of her purse, and begun rearranging her make-up. Bartlow watched her closely, enraged but unable to take his eyes off her face.

"I'm all in, George," she said; "be a dear and tell Thomas to get me a Tom Collins or a gin-fizz."

"Ice-water will do," said Bartlow. "This is a business office, not a bar."

He poured a drink of water out of a thermos bottle and passed it to her. She patted his hand.

"Poor George!" she said. "If you could only relax once in a while. You know, George, that's the main trouble with you, your inability to relax. That's why you

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made such a ghastly failure out of our married life."

Bartlow could think of a dozen answers to that brazen remark, all of them consisting of extremely short Anglo-Saxon words.

"Go on and say it," she encouraged him. "Get it out of your system. Call me names. Tell me once more that you're a martyr and I'm a witch."

"You're a Paynton," said Bartlow. "That's the worst thing any man can say about any woman."

"Not so good, George. Not so good. Your punches lack dynamite, and your footwork is faulty. It's really no fun to fight with you."

Bartlow went back to the window. One moment more, and he would have either kissed or struck her dark-red lips.

"I'm a busy man—" he began.

She laughed vociferously.

"Please—please, George! You're splitting my sides. . . . So, after all these long years, you've suddenly discovered that you're a busy man. . . . My—oh, my! And I thought you were an idler!"

"Very well," he said, and reached for his hat.

She stopped laughing abruptly.

"Sit down, George. We're going to have a talk, a business talk. I came here as a friend. I thought we'd go and have luncheon together, but seeing that you're acting like a boor, I've changed my mind."

Bartlow put his hat back in the closet, but remained standing.

"I'm listening," he said. "Go ahead."

"Ahead is right. Because that's where I'm going. Mr. Bartlow, may I introduce to you Mrs. Alice Paynton Bartlow, the chairman-elect of Grayforth and Company."

She crossed her slim silken legs. Her dark-red lips curled in a cynical smile.

Bartlow looked puzzled for a moment; then he began to laugh.

"Very, very funny!" he said. "I congratulate you on your sense of humor. Next to the Democratic Platform, this is the funniest thing I've heard in many a month. Chairman-elect of Grayforth and Company! Perfectly grand! I can think up a still better title for you—how would you like to be elected chairman of the house committee of a haunted house?"

His shoulders shook. He was actually enjoying the situation. Alice must have heard already of the difficulties facing Tommy Grayforth, and it was her way of telling him that she had.

SHE waited. When he stopped laughing, she said:

"And now that you've had your laugh of the month, Mr. Bartlow, how about our settling down to business?"

"What business?"

"The business of paying the interest on the bond issue of Grayforth and Company. It's due tomorrow, I believe."

"But it won't be paid, Mrs. Bartlow. As you've no doubt heard, your former playmate Tommy is about to relinquish his control of Grayforth and Company. Not much of a loss for the Street, if you want my opinion."

"I don't. Why should I want the opinion of a man as badly misinformed as you are? A short while ago you asked me about the purpose of my visit. Well, the purpose of my visit is to advise you that

Grayforth and Company will meet the payment of the interest on their bond-issue tomorrow morning. The necessary money was deposited at the Guaranty Trust Company one hour ago."

She put on her hat and got up. Bartlow did not feel like laughing any more. There was something so malicious about her steady cynical stare that he was inclined to believe her. What if— No, the idea was entirely too fantastic. . . . Even she wouldn't dare to do a thing like that.

"Why don't you do your thinking aloud?" she asked sarcastically. "Ugly as your thoughts might be, they certainly couldn't be uglier than your facial calisthenics. You want the name of the person or the persons who have come to Tommy's rescue, don't you? Very well, you shall have your information. The last name is Bartlow. The first name is Alice. And the money, every cent of it, originally belonged to a certain George W. Bartlow, who used to be known as the Miracle Boy of Wall Street, but who from now on will be known as the Greatest Sap of Wall Street. Good afternoon, my friend. As one chairman to another, let me tell you that you're losing your grip. Depression aint what it used to be."

She walked past him, shoulders up, her black straw hat and her black dress accentuating the radiance of her blonde hair.

Chapter Eleven

MRS. ALICE PAYNTON BARTLOW was still in her former husband's office when the telephone rang on Joan's desk.

A voice, a faintly foreign voice, said:

"I wish to speak to Miss Joan Darleith."

"Speaking."

"Oh, good morning, Miss Darleith. This is Carl Sturlan's office. Mr. Sturlan would like to see you at your earliest convenience."

"Mr. Carl Sturlan?"

"Yes, Mr. Carl Sturlan."

Joan could not believe her ears. Some one, probably Tommy Grayforth, was playing a joke on her. Why in the world would America's most fortunate concert manager wish to see her?

"I'll have to call you back on that," she said shrewdly, knowing that that would stump Tommy.

"Very well, Miss Darleith. The number is—"

"Never mind the number. I'll find it in the phone directory."

She hung up. Tommy's sense of humor was a bit too much for her. If he wanted to play his practical jokes on grocers and restaurant-keepers, it was all right by her; but why should he laugh at her ambition?

Five minutes later her phone rang again.

"Miss Darleith?"

"Yes."

"Carl Sturlan speaking. I'm afraid that my secretary garbled my message somewhat. I want to see you right away. It's extremely important. Can you come to my office during luncheon-time?"

For a moment she was speechless. She still suspected this was a hoax.

"I'll call you back in ten minutes," she said then. "I'm very sorry, but I can't talk to you now. I'm taking dictation."

"I'll wait for your call, Miss Darleith."

Carl Sturlan waiting for her call! She must be dreaming. Carl Sturlan—the man

who launched the great stars, the man whose willingness to accept an artist under his management augured certain success.

She picked up the phone directory with trembling hands. . . . Carl Sturlan—Carl Sturlan—Carl Sturlan. . . . Was it possible that his phone was not listed? What a fool she had been not to have asked his secretary for his number. . . .

She burst out laughing. Only now she discovered that she was looking for Carl Sturlan under the C's.

There it was where it should be, under the S's: Carl Sturlan. . . .

"Mr. Sturlan's office."

"May I speak to Mr. Sturlan? He asked me to call him. This is Joan Darleith."

"Hold the wire."

She couldn't get her breath. She felt positive now that it was Tommy Gray-forth, and that Mr. Sturlan would refuse to come to the phone. But he responded almost at once.

"Miss Darleith?"

"Yes, Mr. Sturlan."

"Are you coming to my office?"

"Yes, Mr. Sturlan."

"Shall we make it twelve-thirty?"

"Yes, Mr. Sturlan."

Yes, Mr. Sturlan! Beyond, that, she couldn't say anything. Not even thank you. She was afraid she was going to faint. She, Joan Darleith, was going to be received by Carl Sturlan!

She glanced at her watch. Five minutes to twelve. She was not supposed to leave the office before twelve sharp, but nothing mattered any more to her—not even if she were to lose her job. Carl Sturlan wanted to see her!

She grabbed her hat and rushed out. In the narrow corridor connecting her office with Bartlow's private office she nearly collided with a tall blonde woman in a black dress. She ignored her. In her haste she did not notice the startled look on that woman's face.

She walked into the offices of Mr. Carl Sturlan at twelve-twenty. Pale, out of breath, trembling, but ten minutes ahead of time.

"I've an appointment with Mr. Sturlan," she muttered to the girl at the switchboard.

"The name, please?"

"Joan Darleith."

"Oh."

The girl became politeness personate.

"Mr. Sturlan is waiting for you, Miss Darleith. Will you follow me, please."

JOAN followed as if in a fog. She could not get accustomed to the reality of the whole thing. Carl Sturlan wanted to see her! How had he discovered her existence? Who could have told him about her? Certainly not Figuroia. The little Spaniard had told her only too often that Sturlan was the most unapproachable man in the world, who refused to see "even a Castilian gentleman."

"This way, please," said the girl, opening the massive door in front of them.

Joan staggered in. So enormous was the room that at first she failed to notice the man seated behind the desk some sixty feet away from her.

"Miss Darleith?"

She stood still.

"I am Carl Sturlan."

He met her in the middle of the room

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and shook her hand warmly. He was a
fat blond man with drooping reddish
mustache. At first he appeared to be very
tall, but after a few minutes she dis-
covered that he was at least an inch
shorter than she.

He led her to a modernistic couch in
the corner and gently helped her to sit
down.

"Don't be nervous," he said. "Con-
trary to all rumors, I eat young singers
only during the months which have an r
in them—and this is August."

He shook with laughter; she smiled
faintly. She didn't want him to think
that she had failed to appreciate his joke,
but she was afraid to laugh, because she
felt the formation of a lump in her throat.

"I've heard some marvelous things
about you, Miss Darleith. A cigarette?"

"I don't smoke, Mr. Sturlan."

"Well, I'll trap you some other time.
Sooner or later I trap all my singers."

He laughed again.

"They say, Miss Darleith, that you're
ripe for a recital. Is it true?"

"I—I—I—don't know."

"Don't be too modest. An artist has
no right to be modest. How long will it
take you to prepare a program?"

"I'll have to ask Señor Figurola about
it. . . ."

"Figurola? That old clown?" Mr.
Sturlan sneered. "My dear child, in this
office we use better teachers to wash our
windows. . . . Figurola! The very idea!"

Joan remained silent. She wanted to
be loyal to the little Spaniard, but she
didn't dare to quarrel with the great Carl
Sturlan.

"Will two months be enough? I would
like you to give your recital the first Sun-
day in October."

The first Sunday in October! Hadn't

Alan said something about the first Sun-
day in October?

"Then it's set," decided Mr. Sturlan.
"Beginning with tomorrow, you will come
here for your lesson every day, except
Sunday, at six. I'll give you the very
best teacher I've got on my pay-roll."

"But I can't afford a good teacher, Mr.
Sturlan. . . . I really can't. I pay
Señor Figurola ten dollars a week."

"It's just ten dollars too much."

He patted her hand and then added in
a different tone:

"Forget about money. When Carl Stur-
lan makes up his mind about a singer, he
goes the limit. See you tomorrow at six."

She was out of his office before she
could say another word—before she could
even ask him who were the mysterious
"they" who had recommended her to the
great impresario. . . .

Left alone, Mr. Sturlan rang for his
secretary.

"Send a bill to Mr. George W. Bartlow
at his private address for ten thousand
dollars. Mark it, 'Advance for Hall Ex-
penses.'"

"Advance for Hall Expenses? Noth-
ing else?"

"That'll do."

Mr. Sturlan lighted a long black cigar.
He was disgusted with millionaires. They
know how to make money; but aside from
possessing that mysterious idealism which
was apparently the key to the riches of
the world, they were unmitigated fools.

*Money talks—but can it sing? Be
sure to read the next installment in
this drama of wealth and love in
conflict—in the January issue.*

THE GREAT LEVEE

(Continued from page 8)

burghers, the crème de la whipped crème
of Murray Hill and Sutton Place. And
after fifty-three seasons the National
Horse Show serves as public affirmation
that the graces and egrets of top-drawer
society still survive in the milk-and-
monocle midst of smart modernity.

As a spectacle the honors of the horse-
show are about evenly divided between
the terraced boxes of the Garden and
the tanbark ring itself. A few seasons
ago it was estimated that the mounts par-
ticipating in the week's events were
valued at a total of more than three mil-
lion dollars and today a conservative sur-
vey would place the total of the jewels
alone worn by the audience at a single
evening's performance far in excess of
this figure. Not that the smartly gowned
women in the boxes are as ostentatious
in their displays as those of a generation
ago; for stomachers, sunbursts, tiaras and
dog-collars have vanished in favor of
necklaces and platinum-mounted brace-
lets. But if Mrs. Edward McLean is
present, the Hope Diamond will be there;
so will the fabulous jewels of Mrs. E. T.
Stotesbury, which legend has it are
brought from the bank vaults in an ar-
mored car whenever she wears them. So
will the million-dollar string of pearls
which a Wall Street croupier purchased
for a lady friend during the second year

of the depression at a quarter off be-
cause of the times. And the jewelry
only serves to complement the evening
gowns, the cry of the moment, most of
them, from the ateliers of Patou, Schiap-
parelli, Mainbocher, Louiseboulanger,
Molyneux, Lelong and Hélène Yrlande;
and above and beyond the wraps and the
dresses, the gold lamé, the black velvet,
the ostrich feathers and the smoke-gray
chiffon, are the furs. Furs beyond the
precious magnificence of legend: ermine,
broadtail, imperial sable cloaks fashioned
from a hundred pelts at twelve hundred
dollars a skin, silver fox so abundant that
it seems to float up the gangways in ani-
mated bales, matched mink coats whose
every skin is insured at over a hundred
dollars, chinchilla from the snows of the
Peruvian Andes fashioned into trailing
wraps whose price-tags read in six fig-
ures; the deep, almost priceless brown
warmth flecked with silver of the rarest
of all furs, the sea otter, so scarce that
as this is written, there are only seven
skins available in the American market.
And over the whole amphitheatre, blended
with the tobacco-smoke, float seductive
overtones of luxurious perfumes.

Masculine elegance claims as its spe-
cial preserve the promenaded walk around
the edge of the show-ring, where there
are tide-rips of gleaming top hats and

*chapeaux claque*s, broadcloth tailcoats and white waistcoats, where the dinner jacket is conspicuous by its absence amidst the blue and crimson and gold tunics and orders of the military, gleaming like a flashing skein against the subdued pattern of civilian formality. There are gleaming single eyeglasses, the heavily woven *aiguillettes* of staff officers, evening cloaks lined with scarlet and purple, the mess jackets of regiments already old in the battle legends of Europe when Blenheim was fought. The stocky man with the gray top hat and enormous boutonniere of violets is Reginald Rives, the celebrated whip who once, on a bet, turned a coach and four at a smart trot in the minuscule confines of the courtyard of the Metropolitan Club. Behind him, the deep green mess-jacket with scarlet piping and rows of decoration ribbons belongs to the British military attaché, over from Washington for the occasion. The youthful-looking officer in the gold-and-blue evening uniform of the United States Army is Colonel Ralph V. Tobin of New York's own dandy 107th Regiment. Here and there a strikingly gowned woman makes the rounds of the promenade, the chances being she is a society reporter or a fashion spotter, one of the crack practitioners of those callings.

The grooms in their top boots and cockaded hats run to the heads of the horses of a harness class drawn up for the inspection of the judges; the flash bulbs of the photographers gleam like heat-lightning among the boxes of the amphitheater; the uniforms, shirt-fronts and sables flow up and down the aisles and gangways in a perpetual stream, and the horse-show is in full swing.

That's the trouble with New York in 1936. There are no more spectacles, no more good shows that are a part of the urban scene.

REDBOOK'S PICTURE OF THE MONTH

(Continued from page 12)

He's not too heroic, either. He makes you like him. When he goes out and cuts himself a piece of war, you're with him to the fade-out. He's bound to win the approval of all the male members of any audience, by the way he handles a horse; and he's certain to get those heavy-duty sighs from all the gals who still haven't decided to vote the straight Robert Taylor ticket.

Captivating Olivia de Havilland is his leading lady. She will make much less of an impression on her fans with this one than she did in "Anthony Adverse." The reason is obvious: "The Charge of the Light Brigade" is the man's picture, and it has been written and directed to throw the emphasis to that end. It has somewhat the flavor of "The Lost Patrol." You recall that picture had no women in it. The personal love-story in "Brigade" is subordinated to the story between two brothers, and to the higher cause of patriotism. Therefore Miss de Havilland needn't feel badly, because it just wasn't in the cards for the interest to hang around her dark curly head. In fact, audiences are apt to resent the intrusion

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of love-scenes. They want to follow the stories of those soldiers fighting for a country they sensed they would never see again. These poor men went to their death with a small corner of their memories given over to a vignette of elm-shaded lawns, and houses at the end of crooked lanes—something sharply nostalgic which they could remember as England.

In brief, the story opens in 1850 on the northern borders of India. Captain Geoffrey Vickers (played by Errol Flynn), of the 27th Lancers, is accompanying Sir Humphrey Harcourt (E. E. Clive) on a mission to inform Surat Khan (C. Henry Gordon), a border chieftain, that the British Government has discontinued its allowance to him. This information is given after a leopard-hunt in which Flynn saves his life. The chieftain hints broadly that he has made an alliance with Count Igor Volonoff, of the Russian command, and he is willing to be a thorn in England's side from that time on.

Seeing that trouble is brewing in the Balkans between Russia and Turkey, France and England, Flynn is sent to Arabia to purchase a large number of horses for the British army. *En route* he stops at Delhi, where he meets his fiancée, Olivia de Havilland, and his brother, Patrick Knowles (another young English actor, new to American films). Miss de Havilland and Flynn's brother are deeply in love, but she feels duty bound to marry Flynn.

But trouble breaks swiftly. The native troops attack the garrison at Chukoti. By the ruse of a white flag of truce, Khan leads them into a massacre. Women and

children, native troops and British officers—all are killed, with the exception of Flynn, who had saved the chieftain's life.

Learning his brother and fiancée are in love, Flynn departs for the Crimea with his 27th Lancers. Khan has joined the Russians at Balacava. When Flynn receives from Lord Raglan the command to retreat, he tells the Light Brigade that England has at last given them the chance they have all longed for—to avenge the death of their families and friends. He orders his brother back to his fiancée for safety, and leads the Brigade straight toward the Russian guns. He kills Khan and is himself killed.

Two things help greatly to make this top last season's "Lives of the Bengal Lancers;" the film is rich with camera delights, and it has a complete musical score by Max Steiner. There is very little comedy relief; per Spring Byington adds the only poignant note. Henry Stevenson, Donald Crisp and Nigel Bruce are a great acting triumvirate. David Niven could stand more masculine parts in the future, if the way he handles this one is any indication.

Sam Bischoff, the producer, was fortunate in getting ideal dramatic construction, in that the interest rises faster and higher, with the charge of the Brigade, until the crescendo of thundering hoofs carries you to the very climax of victory. It's plenty zip-zi! Your spine will curl at the terrific spills which horses and riders take in the last eight hundred feet of film. If this doesn't get your pulse up, then we can just plain Sam the Old Accordion Man!

NEIGHBOR TO THE SKY

(Continued from page 21)

Anybody did, with Jeff, unless he could see beyond Jeff's manner and way of speaking. Mary and Luke could always get along with him.

"Okay," Bob said, shrugging. "Good luck to you. I'm turning in."

"You're turning into that garage! Now, too! And make it snappy!"

"Oh, I am, am I? Not so you'd notice it. Who in hell do you think—"

"Bob!" Mary said. "Don't you say another word. You know better. . . Now you go out and see what you can do to his car."

Bob's young eyes scanned their faces. Then he shrugged again, put on cap and leather jacket and went out. Well before daybreak the car was ready—if not quite as Bob would have had it, at least ready for use. Luke had gone out with him to give it a stamp of approval—"Good work, boy! You certainly know the tricks!"—while Jeff finished a hurried breakfast and said good-by to Mary and Grammm. Margery Lee did not come out of her room; she was not yet up.

NOW Jeff was gone, must be as far as Bangor anyway, a long distance from the Gilman place; and Margery was coming through the clearing toward Luke.

"I hope you don't mind my coming over here. I had to see you alone. I had to talk with you."

It did not seem like the teacher. She never wanted to see or talk to anyone. Her breath came fast. Her eyes, so often

bitter and lusterless, as Bob had said, as if she had a headache, were hot and bright—with fright, Luke thought. He saw that the papers trembled in her hand.

"You've been hurrying," he said. "Sit down on the step a minute."

"I can't. I'm so cold—"

"What do you think of the cabin?"

"I love it." She did not look at it.

"I've always loved it."

"You've always—"

"You didn't suppose I'd ever seen it before? Well, I have. I came home from school this way a good many days last fall. And I've been here this spring too. I've stayed until dark sometimes, and been near to losing my way home. I love it."

"Well!"

"That surprises you, doesn't it? You don't know much about me, what I do, nor what I like, nor anything about me, do you? You just—hate me!"

"Hate you!" Did he hate her? "Why, no—"

"Oh, yes, you do. Or if you don't, it's just because it wouldn't be like you to hate anybody. Don't you suppose I know the way you feel toward me? I don't blame you, either. I know how much you think of Jeff, and what I've done to him. . . How could I have helped it, Luke? What better way could I have done than I did?"

She was asking him to tell her. She stood in front of him, very small and straight, as if he were a judge.

"Why, I don't see," he told her gently. "I don't see what you could have done. You couldn't help it if you didn't—maybe you could have been a little easier on him sometimes—"

"I know what you mean. But I'm not naturally kind. Not like you. I—I fly out at people when they pester me. . . . It would have looked better in me if I'd been kinder. I see that. But how would it have helped him?"

"It wouldn't, I guess. You're right about that."

"Why don't you ask me why I came to your house at all? That's something you've got reason to hate me for. Why don't you ask me why I came, when I already knew how he felt?"

"I never thought about that—"

"Well, I'll tell you. I'll tell you why I came. I came because I was cold, sick with the cold. It was as Jeff said, I was freezing to death in that room; and I had to stay in it, because I had to shut the door between me and the Stacys. I couldn't stand it downstairs. I couldn't stand it with Pa Stacy coughing and grunting in my face, and Ma Stacy padding around in her stocking-feet, and the smell of the smoke and the grease and the cellar. And I couldn't eat there because I saw spiders on the cake-board, and she washed her dishes and sink with the same cloth. I tell you I couldn't stand that sort of thing. I've had enough of it. I worked my way through normal school to get away from filth and slovenliness—"

"Well, of course," Luke interrupted. He was at a loss how to stop the flow now it had started. "I see how you felt. Of course. I wouldn't have thought it would be as bad as that up there. Sarah Lizzie never had the name of being a great cook, but I never heard she was slack. I suppose, though, she and George are getting old now. That's bound to make a difference."

"I could have gone to Steeres' if I would have," Margery said. His voice was quieting her. She no longer looked desperate and frightened, but more like a child trying not to cry—a thin, dark child in a big, stout coat and skirt and homemade blouse. "That was the only other place where they offered me board. But I heard about that boy there. That Lemmy. I've waked up in the night thinking of him. I never saw him, but I know just how he looks—"

"Lemmy? Oh, he don't look bad. Lemmy's harmless."

"I don't care how he looks. I wouldn't go there. I'd stay in the schoolhouse first." She was crying now, big, slow tears, and paying no attention to them. "I'm telling you I've about killed myself getting away from a place that had plenty of Lemmies. I got an education so I could be neat and clean and decent and normal, and read books and speak the King's English—"

SO this was why she had corrected Bob's grammar every now and then.

"And here I am dumped down in another country place to teach!"

"Country? You don't think it's just in the country there's dirt and feeble-mindedness?" Luke asked, meditating.

"There's more of it. There must be. A hundred times," she told him passion-

ately. "And anyway, in a city you could get away from it if you were bound to."

He supposed that this was so.

"I got away from it here too," she conceded. "But the only way I could was through somebody's kindness; and Jeff was the only friend I had. . . . He was good to me. He came up to that first little entertainment at the schoolhouse, the only man that did, and he clapped for the children, and helped the boys freeze ice-cream. And when he asked me home to supper, I was glad to come. I'd seen your mother, and she looked so clean and kind; and your house was neat and snug. . . . I liked all of you, and I wanted to stay. I didn't even want to leave, that first night. And as soon as I got a chance to come—well, I came. . . . I thought Jeff would get over it. Really, I did. I thought the more he saw of me, the less he'd think—I mean, I know I'm nasty and disagreeable. And I'm not pretty. Nobody ever—wanted to make love to me before—never in my life. Honest and true!"

HE did not hate her now, if he ever had—he liked her. He would not have supposed any girl would make such an admission. Perhaps she was not pretty. He did not know about such things. He liked her soft, short, straight hair blowing out dark behind her head, and her brief, reluctant smile. Her shoulders were very narrow underneath her coat, even for a girl. He thought how broad his own must look beside them.

"I should have said—" He broke off, grinning with embarrassment. "Of course I'm not a woman. But I should have said it wouldn't be so hard to fall for Jeff!"

She shook her head.

"No, it wouldn't be—for some women."

She laid the books, with the papers beneath them, on the step, and leaned against the logs of the cabin, seeming to think about what he had said. He took up a piece of new wood, and sitting down, began shaping it with his knife into a button to be turned on the door. It was a relief to him to be at work, and pleasant, in some way, to hear her voice without looking at her.

"Well, I could have liked him, I guess. But he wouldn't let me do that. That wasn't his idea. You must know him well enough—you ought to know he's bound to have everything. He—"

She laughed, a surprisingly bright, new-sounding laugh. "Jeff in love is like an army storming a fort. . . . Some women would like that. They'd like it especially if they wanted to love him. But I didn't want to."

He glanced up. She stood with her hands behind her, and her head leaning against the wall. The light from the sunset shone on her face. He wanted her to keep on talking. If she once stopped, she might turn back into the door, little person she had been.

"You didn't want to, eh? Seems as if there's a good deal you don't want. What do you want?"

"Oh, that's easy: I want my chance to be somebody. I've been building it ever since I can remember, just the way a bird builds a nest, out of scraps it finds where nobody else would see anything at all. I've had a terrible life. I couldn't

tell you. . . . Now I want a good life. . . . I got away from—the place where I was—and got an education. Now I'm going to climb on it. I'm in the country again, but it can't hold me. Not longer than a year. I'm counting off the days; I'm saving my money; by June I'll have a year's experience. Then I'll get into a city school. I'll keep on. I'll learn more about how people live and about clothes. I'll take courses."

"What kind of courses?"

"In dramatics. I'm very good in plays. I'll do something some day."

He did not doubt it. He watched her curiously, his knife and wood hanging between his knees.

"In moving-pictures?"

"No. Oh, no. On the stage. I want to do really fine things. Shakespeare—and the old Greek plays, and Chekov. I was in 'Medea' at school. Oh, of course I'm not ready yet. I know that."

"Medea's great, isn't it?"

She glanced at him sharply.

"You know 'Medea'?"

"Sure. My father had all those old plays. He used to read them out loud, nights. They're all there on the shelves in the kitchen. I go through them every little while, and I've always liked 'Medea' about the best."

She slid down on the step. They were aware of each other now in a new way. He tried eagerly to guess what part in "Medea" she might have taken. She studied his face.

"Your father read it?"

"Yes. Which part was it—"

"I thought he was a lumberman—and a farmer. Wasn't he?"

"Yes. Sure, he was. He taught the school too, whenever he felt like it. What part—"

She laughed, not so pleasantly as before.

"I was trying to imagine my father reading 'Medea'. My father would no more look inside a book—"

"Well, that's the way it is. The same as with anything else. Some do and some don't. Look here, what part was it you had?"

"Why—'Medea'?"

"You did? You're so little!"

"They said I looked tall. That's what you can do, you know, if you've got anything to you. You don't have to be tall, or fair, or beautiful. If you're an actress, that's all you have to be. You can be anything anybody ever was."

THIS was a new idea to Luke. He liked it. He thought over the women of the plays he knew, and tried to imagine Margery as each one—as *Helen*, *Iphigenia*, *Portia*, *Juliet*, *Lady Macbeth*, *Lady Teazle*, *Wendy*. Her face and figure changed magically before his eyes as each name came to mind, and yet remained her own. He saw what she meant. Character, not features, made the person.

But while he lingered, Margery was going on. She knew she had to study, she said; and she would. She would work all day and study all night, and live on bread and lettuce, if she had to, to save money for more study. She had talent, and she had ambition to go with it. She had already gone a good way and would go further. Nothing could keep back any girl who was bound to get somewhere, if

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she had intelligence and was bound to go. *Nothing.* She would get some day where nobody in the whole State of Vermont could say she hadn't kept her vow to be a success. She had been told the day would come when she would be glad of a plate of soup in her father's kitchen; well, it never would—she would starve first. But she did not have to starve really. She knew what she was doing. It might take time, but she had patience. Within five years she would be on the stage in New York. Within ten years she would have her name in lights, her own choice of plays, and her own company. Thank God, this was America, where no beginning was poor enough to keep a man or a woman either from the top.

LUKE only half heard; he could not keep up with her racing tongue. It was reasonable enough that she should expect to play on the New York stage; he could see she had a strange, lovely voice, and something unreal, now he thought about it, in her face and figure; she must feel in herself what she could do, as he knew the way he could twirl a hammer in his hand, or send a plane gliding as smoothly over wood as a hand over velvet. It was right she should. But what was all this about getting to the top, starving before she would eat a plate of soup in her father's kitchen, proving her ability to the whole State of Vermont? What had it to do with anything like playing *Medea*, with seeming tall and fair and beautiful when you were small and dark and—not pretty? She had said that; it was a wonder she could say all the rest in the same breath, and say it so much louder. It made no sense. What was the object in such a thing as seeming other than you were? What better food there was than a plate of good soup in the kitchen at home? What did the State of Vermont care where she went or what she did?

Luke had never thought about such things, and there was no time for him to think about them now. He had only instinctive reactions to guide him. He thought of Harrison. Sitting at the table with big Luke, Mary, Grammum, and the other children, Harrison had kept almost as quiet as Margery ever had. It must mean something that Harrison left the family when he was most needed, were himself down within reach of consumption working his way to a law degree, and now never left New York for more than a few days at home. He did not say much here, even now; just what he had let drop about masonry might be an indication of how he felt toward Big Luke and the Gilman place, and the whole of Derwich. Maybe the hills and stars had not said the same thing to him they had to Luke. Maybe next week, on the high seas, Harrison would tell Inez: "I don't know how far I'll get in the law, but I'll make a go of it. Don't you worry about that. You and I'll never go back into Maine for anything but the deer and the fish. I'm out, and I'll stay out." To the right one, a person would speak out what he had kept to himself all his life.

Luke stopped short, startled by the place where his thought had brought him. Harrison to Inez. . . . Margery to Luke. And Jeff was riding alone somewhere beyond Bangor.

"I think I've talked you deaf," Margery said. "I didn't mean to say so much. I meant to try to explain to you—but I didn't mean to say all I have. I don't know why I did. Only that you asked me, and I was so surprised and pleased you understood about 'Medea'. . . . I always have been so alone in these things, you see. I never expect anybody else's eye to see with mine. It seems as if you know what I mean—" She hesitated. "I believe I always had an idea you would. Or else why didn't I go to your mother to explain?"

"You maybe thought it would be easier out here. There's never one alone in the house."

She picked up her books and stood looking at him.

"That's part of it, but it's not all of it. . . . Maybe you have plans for yourself some day. Maybe you're—just waiting, too—"

"No." He laughed, but he felt shaken. He set the half-made screen inside the cabin and locked the door. "No, I'm not waiting for a thing. I'm one of the lucky ones, I guess. All I want out of life is right here—more than a man has any reason to expect. I'm as much a fixture as that boulder over there."

They started along the bank of the brook. She turned once and looked back.

"I do love the cabin. It looks so free in the clearing, high and free. And I've noticed how the chimney and roof-lines slide in with the skyline. I'm sure you planned it. It couldn't have just happened. It's complete, like a line of a poem."

"I thought you said you weren't kind."

"I said you couldn't count on it. Sometimes I am. But it wasn't kindness to say that. . . . Will your brother be as pleased with it as he ought to be?"

"I don't know. He's not very easy pleased. I guess it will suit him all right if I can keep the price down. All he wants it for is a shelter when he's hunting or fishing around here."

"He doesn't stay at the house?"

"He says it will be more convenient all around, this way, when he's married. As a matter of fact, I don't know but what he'd rather not stay at the house. Maybe he feels about it a good deal the way you do about where you come from."

(Inez would confide in Harrison, in her turn. . . . Luke in Margery.)

"Oh—"

She did not say: "Oh, he couldn't!"

"For my part, I can't understand it. There's no place in the world I'd as soon be."

"Not even the cabin?"

"The cabin's Harrison's. And it's new. The house is home."

"Is it a big law-firm Harrison's with?"

"I don't know how big. He says it's one of the oldest and best in New York City."

"That's wonderful, isn't it?"

"It's what he wanted."

"Your mother must be proud."

"I guess she's glad he's satisfied."

THEY walked on quietly and as he let her through the pasture bars, Margery said, smiling faintly: "Well, have I fixed it so you, anyway, won't think too hard of me after I've gone?"

"After you've gone?"

"Oh, of course I'm going. I can stay at Stacy's the rest of the term. It's warming up. They knew the room was cold—"

"Well, don't hurry. You wait awhile. Let me speak to my mother."

He spoke to Mary that night. He stood at the corner of the sink, his shoulder hunched against the door-frame, and watched her washing the supper dishes. The plates with a gray ivy-leaf design, the gold-band cups, the heavy red-and-white glass, and the iron kettles and frying pan; the same dishes she had used ever since her marriage, most of them Big Luke's mother's, but the cups her own.

"What are you going to do about the teacher?"

"Well, I don't know, hardly. It's no comfort having her in the house, I must say. Though it seems as if she did act brighter tonight than I've ever seen her. Did you notice it?"

"She talked more. I suppose if she didn't take to Jeff, it made it hard for her."

"I don't see but he's plenty good enough for her to take to!"

"Seems to me he is. But anybody has likes and dislikes. . . . I was thinking it wouldn't look so very well for her to leave right off after Jeff did, would it?"

"There, I don't know as it would. It's awkward all around."

"It won't be long until June."

"Only thing, it worries me so to have that west room cluttered up, when it's all we've got for nice!"

"As it grows warmer, why don't you let her use the back corner bedroom, other side of Grammm?"

"I suppose I could do that," Mary said. She looked up at him thoughtfully, and then down at the red glass she was polishing. "Why, yes, I could put her in there, for all I know."

Chapter Two

ALL the spring Luke watched Margery and listened to her. Even through the week-days, while she sat at her desk in the schoolhouse and he knelt to lay a floor or climbed a ladder carrying a bunch of shingles, he could still see and hear her as she looked standing over the stove with a cover lifted, as she sounded calling him at the barn door when supper was ready before his chores were finished, as she looked walking through the field hunting for violets, and as she read aloud from Big Luke's books.

The teacher was a changed person with the Gilmans'. Outside, she might still seem narrow-eyed and thin-lipped; the neighbors said of her that she never looked up on the road for fear she might recognize some one and have to speak. But with the Gilmans she became gentle or gay, talkative or quiet, by turns; never bitterly silent any more. The back corner bedroom was as satisfactory to her as the parlor, for she spent little time in it except to sleep. Mary grudgingly admitted that she seemed now like any other girl, only more intense, as if what she wanted she wanted so it burned her dry and hot, and her mind never rested or wandered, from scheming how best and quickly she could get it. But she was like a daughter to Mary, bringing home gossip to her, running errands to



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the cellar, pouring the tea, reading an item from the paper, cutting out and stitching up a dress that fitted as neatly and looked as well as any Mary could have bought at a store; and she waited on Grammum like a lady's maid, with fingers that were never harsh on Lucy Wallace's dried roseleaf skin, her thin, silvery hair, her deep-set nails. No two women who had spent ten years growing older with no younger one in the house could hold out against such little ministrations. Even Bob liked to watch her knitting a pink scarf for Grammum. He offered to wind the yarn for her while she held the skein, claiming he could make a ball of better shape than hers. She still spoke of his grammar sometimes, but he seemed now to take it more as a favor than otherwise; and he brought may-flowers to her from the woods.

BUT the spring really belonged to her and Luke. He saw as much of her in the house as any of them did, and whoever she spoke to, she looked to him for his attention and approval. Her reading was all for him. One by one the others would yawn and say good-night and leave the kitchen; but Luke would never go to bed nor even grow sleepy as long as he could still hear her voice. It held him as no other sound in his life ever had. He thought he had liked many sounds—mostly small ones: a new fire, cattle chewing, brook water, wind in the leaves, some one singing in a house he passed, distant train whistles, rustle of partridge, hum of telephone wires, the cracking of ice, the snapping of nails; all sounds so small they would be overlooked in a confusion, but clear and sweet in country silences. Margery's voice was like them, as she read "The Tempest" in the kitchen or "Midsummer Night's Dream" in the orchard; and yet it had a vibration which Luke knew could, if necessary, raise it fine and true until it drowned out even confusion. Watching her, listening to her, he doubted his eyes and his ears equally, for she seemed to him as beautiful as her voice. He kept a steady grip on himself. He had never been in love before.

One night Margery said suddenly, closing the book: "You know, I've never had a chance before to read aloud to such an appreciative listener. It's fun. It's showing me a good audience is a good audience, however few are in it, and I'd about as soon read to you as to ten thousand!"

"Well, if you would, then you're all fixed up. You don't have to go off, and starve, and study, and get your name in lights."

"Oh, I don't suppose I meant—"

"You didn't mean what you said?"

"Yes, I did. As far as it goes. I do love to read to you, Luke. I can hear you listening. But I have to know how to read just as well for the one as for the ten thousand. I can't get along without the study. You know—I hunger and thirst for it. And I don't expect to get it without a little physical starvation. . . . Things never come easy to me."

"I don't see why study for what you want to do has to be done out in New York, with stages and teachers and diagrams, and cost you money. You know what there is to know about 'Clytemnestra.' They can't tell you anything more or better out there."

"They can show me how to express all I know and feel, then."

"Maybe; but it don't seem reasonable to me. You've got the books, eyes to see and a voice to read and the head to understand them. I don't see what else you need."

"There's technique—special ways—"

"Tricks, you mean."

"All right. Call them tricks, if you want to. Why don't you call using words a trick, too? They're a special way of communicating with other people, so they can understand—"

"Well, when they're necessary, I guess they're all right; but if anybody uses them when they don't need them, then they are a trick. They can't be used to express the best things. You have to say the best things some other way, or let them go unsaid. You know that."

"I don't, either. I don't know what you mean."

"You mean you want your name in lights, in spite of what you said."

"I want something to prove I have succeeded, I suppose."

"And you don't get that kind of proof from reading to an audience of one. A lamp on a kitchen table gives light enough for one."

"Yes, I see it does. It's nice, too. . . . But Luke, you must try to understand. It isn't the same with me as it is with you. You've come through growing up so—so *whole*! And I'm all twisted and broken—"

"Ho! Nobody'd ever think it to see you skipping around here, singing with Mother, and helping Grammum prink. I don't believe you're half so bad off as you make out. Come now!"

"Well, this spring I'm kind of—stuck together with mending-tape. . . . But I'm still splintery underneath. I am, really, Luke. It's better for you to know it. The only possible way for me ever to be—the way you are—is to find a sort of ramrod that I can run right down the length of me, to hold me up. A nice, shiny ramrod of—yes, success, and the calm self-respect, and assurance, and security that would go with it."

"Maybe it wouldn't."

"Oh, Luke, it's *got* to!"
Already he was inclined to believe her, but held back from saying so.

SHE spoke, sometimes, of her family: She was nearly nineteen now, according to her father, though she felt older. Nineteen years ago, in August, he said, she had been born in the Shoetown company house where the Lees were living at the time. Margery remembered that house, but strangely enough, she had a clear memory of the first time she ever saw it. How was that to be explained, she asked Luke. If she had been born there, she would have accepted it as her home, and never noticed it; that was the way of children; but she distinctly remembered seeing it as an unknown and rather frightening place. And another queer thing was that when she went to Shoetown just a few years ago and looked in the town books, she found no record of a birth at that time to the Henry Lees. They had had two daughters earlier, but that year no birth was recorded, either in August or any other month. It seemed strange, to say the least.

"They weren't always so particular about such things as they are now," Luke said. "I shouldn't wonder if half of us here may have been left out of the town books. I know once or twice Mother didn't even have a doctor. And then there are always fires every little while."

"That's what Father says. It's true, of course, and it makes him an easy way out."

"Out of what?"

"I don't know. I wish I did. All I know is that I hate him, loathe him with my whole heart and soul."

She spoke quietly. He could not doubt she meant it, and yet it seemed incredible.

"Your father?"

"Yes. If he is. I don't believe it, though. How could he be? My father! If you could see him!"

She said he worked hard, but was too stupid to profit by his labor. He wanted nothing so much as to exert his authority. He was the only one in the house who knew anything or could do anything; and as long as his wife and children behaved themselves, they could be sure of a roof and a bite to eat; but when they crossed him, they could clear out; they were welcome at any time to move on, and then they would see what would happen to them! They would come crawling home soon enough—too soon for his liking; and when they came, they would take what they could catch!

"Oh, he's a brute," Margery said. "I've seen him wind a chain around a horse's middle and tighten it with a crowbar until the horse groaned so that I could hear her from a half-mile away in the woods, running through the underbrush as fast as I

could go. It isn't likely he's my father."

"You may take after the other side."

"No. Mother's dead; but she was a weak, sickly, fawning thing. Slatternly. I pitied her, and I tried to think as well of her as I could. I stayed at home as long as she lived. But I don't believe she was my mother. . . . No, Luke, I tell you I was not born in that house. The first time I ever saw it, I was between two and three years old. A man—not Father—carried me in, in his arms, and I was crying. He put me down and told the children who were there to come and play with me. Floss and Cissy came; I remember I thought their long, light curly hair was pretty, and I wished mine were like it; but my dress was prettier, and my coat and bonnet had fur on them. They stroked it, and I pulled it away because their hands were dirty. I had never seen them before, and I had never seen the house before; they took me all over it, and showed me where I would sleep with them, the three of us in a big white iron bed with the paint chipping off; and I said I wouldn't sleep there, for I always slept in my own crib. I thought the whole house was very dark and empty, and it seemed strange to hear our shoes clattering on the bare stairs, and that I had no rail to pull myself up by. I did a good deal of crying, and at first they tried to comfort me and please me, but more and more they left me alone."

"Getting a little splintered even then, I guess," Luke said gently.

"Even then. . . . You don't believe all this I'm saying, do you?"

"I believe anything you say."

"I mean, you think I dreamed it. You

think I belong with whoever I grew up with."

"It seems likely. Most of us do."

"But Luke, I don't even look like them! Any of them? Not a bit! Every one of them is light-complexioned, long, slow-motivated. Just as different from me as white from black."

"I don't see as it matters much, anyway. They're what they are, and you're what you are—"

"It matters this much: I'm not what I might have been, if they hadn't been what they are. If I could have stayed with my—my carpeted stairs and my polished railing, or if I'd even had a clean, bright house like this to grow up in, and a mother like Mary, I might have felt as if I could—I mean, I might not have felt so driven—"

"Then it does matter."

She went on:

When Margery was about five years old, the Lees moved into the country. When the shoe-shop closed, and Henry could earn no money for rent and groceries, he paid his last fifty dollars down on a farmhouse and barn and twenty acres of Vermont hills, and moved his family there. Now it was much worse than it had ever been. The Shoetown house had been boxlike, greenish-yellow, set in a small, bleak yard; but all the walls were plastered, water ran in the sink, and church, school and stores were only a block or so away. The Louisboro house was only half finished off inside. It had no paint, no porch, no blinds. Gaunt fir trees straggled up to its windowsills, and the water was in an open spring across the road. It was necessary to

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break ice to get water in the winter; and bringing it up the hill in the heat of summer was a thankless business; not much of it reached the house, and what little came was spent on the porous floor boards, the stuck-on dishes, the kettles that burned dry.

"Mother had a baby that first year—a boy, and that pleased them. But they took it out in being pleased. His clothes hung airing around the stove all summer, hardly even washed. He was always sick. Maybe you think I liked it."

"I bet you didn't," Luke chuckled.
"No, I didn't. I didn't like being the same as sewed into my heavies in the fall, either, nor finding nits in my hair, nor so much as looking at my fingernails. . . . Oh, dear, I don't know why I tell you. I should think it would make you curl just to think—"

"It don't." He grinned. "You see, you're so neat now it almost hurts, so I can imagine quite a few specks and not mind."

"It wasn't only the dirt. I know I talk as if it was, but it wasn't. That was the most unbearable because it had to be part of me; I couldn't help it. The other things I could rise above—with my mind; but it was hateful to me. Mother couldn't cook. A few frozen potatoes and some pork gravy made a meal for her; she'd put on a dish of berries for us to eat and never pick them over. There was the vile talk of the children in the district school that we sometimes managed to get to. I'd scheme for days how I could get out of the house and go to school; and when I got there, things would be said that sent me running home again. . . . Nothing to read when I would rather have had books than ice-cream—or even meat and tomatoes! It seems to me I dreamed every night of fresh meat and tomatoes."

"And maybe the worst was the way that Father and Mother fought with each other. I pitied her, but I hated her too—hated them both. They never acted as if we had ears. When he was mad, he roared out his words until they hit the ridgepole; you couldn't get away from them anywhere in the house; and Mother would cry, and argue while she was crying—sob and gasp and sometimes scream. It was not fit for grown people to listen to, much less children. I've seen the time I've stayed out in the haymow all night long to get away from it. I'd rather they had beat me. He did that, too, a good many times."

LUKE regarded her with new tenderness. Almost new respect, as pictures of what she had been through began to paint themselves in his mind. He had not experienced such things. It sounded like a tale of war, terrible but in a foreign country, touching him only because it had touched her. But she had been in it and come through it, not even permanently injured. He was not sure he could have done as well as she had. She had a fine, tough streak in her, for all her complaining.

"It must have been pretty bad. I never heard of such things."

She gave him a strange look.

"Oh, yes, you have, Luke. That's what tears my heart out—"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean it's all here. Not in this house,—not all of it,—but in the neighborhood. You've heard the same things, or you would have if you'd listened. You've seen the same things; they didn't affect you the same way, that's all. That's why I know I—couldn't stay here even if I forgot my ambitions. Sometimes when I'm with you, I almost believe it's different—but then the next day I see something I recognize, and I know I couldn't stand it. It's dirt and cruelty and stupidity—ignorance—poverty—beastliness here, just the same as it was there. It's a place where nothing comes in from the outside—no light, no grace, no real civilization, not even water. . . . It's what I'm bound to get away from, Luke, whatever it costs me. If I stayed in it, I'd never be any use to myself—or anybody else. I was born to get away. . . . And to get Artie away—before it kills him!"

Artie was her brother.

IT did not take her long to say all she had to say of Floss and Cissy. From girls with pale curls and grimy fingers, they had grown to women and been married. They were both in Louisboro still. Floss had three-year-old twin boys and a baby, also a boy; it was doubtful if the twins were quite as bright as they should be. Floss worked herself sick and accomplished nothing, like her father; her husband was twenty years older than she, and lazy, a village character, a man who always talked in town meeting and got himself laughed at. Cissy had a daughter; Cissy's husband was living with another girl now, and Cissy was glad to be rid of him; Cissy worked in the village grocery store, and boarded her child with Floss.

"They're satisfied enough," Margery dismissed them.

But it was different with Artie, the sick baby Margery had tended. When he had been two, and five, and seven, he and she were playmates. They whispered together. They had secrets. She read aloud to him from a book about two children who were kidnaped into a circus and rode giant horses round and round, while the ringmaster cracked a whip. Margery and Artie planned how they could run away to a circus, where Margery would ride the fiercest horses, bareback, standing on tiptoe, and jumping through hoops of fire; but Artie need ride only gentle creatures all draped in white, and he in a white and gold uniform because he was so beautiful, with his white skin, blue eyes, and bright gold hair, that people would pay just to look at him. Artie felt glad of that; he was a very timid little boy; because of his timidity they waited a long time for him to grow older. Margery was ready to go, for years, but she waited for Artie to grow older and braver, because she could not bear to leave him behind.

They waited too long. One day when Artie was eight, his father sent him into the field on the horse-rake. The horse was gentle enough, but Artie was frightened and cried; his hands trembled so that he dropped the reins when he turned a corner; and the horse, feeling them at her heels, broke into a gallop. There still was no danger; Artie held on for

dear life; Margery went running. She saw him now as he had looked turning his small terrified face toward her. "Oh, Margie! Margie!" Margery could have stopped the horse, but her father struck her down and went into the field himself. He stopped the horse all right, but that did not satisfy him; he was in a fury with Artie, Margery, the horse, and perhaps himself. He pulled off his boot and pounded the horse over her head and ears. She shied and reared, and Artie was thrown off sideways, over the wheel and into the apple-tree. . . . It may have been the way his hip was set by the country doctor, or it may have been partly the shock; whatever accounted for it, Artie never walked again. No circus life for Artie, no piano, no sea voyages, no pictures in great galleries for Artie, not unless Margery could pick him up and carry him to them. Nothing for Artie but his lumpy bed in the corner of the kitchen, his creaking rocker by the front window, his bleached canvas hammock under the fir trees on warm days. He was fourteen now. It had been six years. Margery had been away from home nearly all of them, riding her giant horses through her hoops of fire; but she had not forgotten Artie, and before long she would have him with her.

Luke thought she spoke of Artie as she might some day of her own son.

"Who takes care of him?"

"It isn't likely he gets much care. Father's married again: A young Italian woman. Big and coarse—swarthy—"

"You don't seem to like 'em any better dark than you do light!"

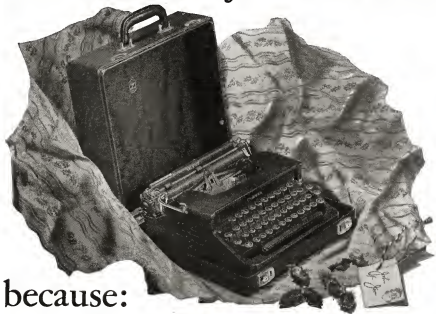
"No, I don't like them any way. But I suppose she does, more or less. She's got her own children now, though—a girl and lately a boy. They probably don't take much time or thought for Artie. . . . But I'll get him away from there—"

OTHER times they talked about Luke; she asked him how well he had liked school.

He said he had enjoyed it. Not as she had, probably; she must have been like Harrison, taking two years in one and winning all the honors. Harrison would sit looking through the bulletin, even back in high school, to see what awards were offered for the next term, and check the ones he meant to try for. He got them, too, in high school, college and law-school—leather-bound books, gold medals, scholarships, Greek prizes, debate ribbons, Phi Beta Kappa keys, honorary memberships, editorships, fellowships, and finally a junior partnership in the New York firm. School had not meant awards to Luke. He saw no sense in competition. It never seemed to him that he did any the worse because some one else in his class did better, or any better because some one else did worse. What he wanted was to find out all he could. He had liked that. In the grades he liked history and geography. He could remember the day he first got the idea of the globe, and after that for weeks spent every recess with it; he held the world in his hands, Europe and Africa, even Asia, even the five oceans and the seven seas! In high school he liked science; but now as he looked back on it, he thought physical geography and astronomy had meant the most to him.

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Luke did not remember; he had not thought of them for years; he supposed they ran about average. He had a habit of getting lost in one thing and letting all the rest go—not necessarily in one subject, but sometimes in one assignment, in one book, in one theorem; and he would spend weeks on it, though often his work did not come to anything. That was what he liked. He liked to be let alone; and wherever he started to dig, he wanted to keep on digging. A good many times while the class was going forward, Luke was busy going back. He was bound to find out what a formula meant before he could be content to use it.

MARGERY shook her head, smiling at him. "I can't see why a boy with ideas like that turned into a carpenter."

"I never turned into a carpenter," Luke told her. "I was born a carpenter. I was a carpenter long before I had any ideas of any kind, and I'll be one after I'm so old I can't tell one book from another. On my job a man can keep at one thing until it's finished, and finished right. That suits me. And as my father always said: 'A man with a trade has got security and freedom both; he can go where he pleases over the face of the earth and there will always be work for his hands and bread for his mouth!'"

"Then, if that's true," she said, "a trade ought to help a man to get ahead, not hold him back."

"Mine's been a help to me, all ways," Luke answered.

"I mean, if it did all it might do, it would be a step toward something better. Being a carpenter would be just a staid-landing, sort of, on the way to being—well, an architect."

"Sure. It is. I architected a garage for Joe Whitehouse just last week."

"I mean something better than garages."

"I don't know of anything better than a garage for a car that hasn't got one."

"I mean something—more complicated—and more beautiful than garages."

Luke grinned.

"You mean—something to put a man's name in lights! . . . See here, now! It's you that have got ambition, not me."

But she would not laugh with him.

"What if I had some for you, too? It couldn't do any harm."

Luke was not so sure. He had a notion now of what was in her mind, and thought of it more than he wanted to. The more he thought of it, the more natural it seemed that he might go her way, since she could not come his. It would not have occurred to him; but now that she suggested it, he saw that there was one means by which they could stay together—if he could do with her, and perhaps for her, what she was bound to do. He turned the possibility over and over in his head. If he took a course in architecture, where would he have to go for it, and how long would it be before he was established in a city place and able to take care of Margery? What would she be doing in the meantime? Would even an architect be good enough for her to marry, if by then she was a leading lady on the stage?

What would become of the farm, with only Mary, Grammm and Bob left here? Mary had judgment; she could manage the place and keep it up if she had men to work it. Bob would never be much help

to her, either next year or ten years from now; but she could manage it if she had funds. How long would it be, if he should go, before he could spare money to send back to her to put into Gilman ground, Gilman roofs and foundations? What would it do to him if he had to see the place slipping down, further every summer; more and more land turned into pasture, more and more pasture grown up to scrub pine, and sills rotting, roofs leaking, clapboards falling off? Further every summer. What kind of life did a man lead who came back to where he belonged only once a year?

Margery seemed to understand what this meant to him, and that he needed time. She did not hurry him.

One night she said: "What do you suppose I have here?"

She spread out a half-dozen or more big yellow cards, and four thin blue paper-covered books.

"I don't know."

She was looking at him with amusement; with pride too.

"Don't you, honestly, Luke?"

"No. What are they?"

"They're your reports. I found the cards in the drawer of an old chest in the woodshed up at school. Then I thought your mother might have kept the ones you had from the academy, so I asked her about it. She had them, yours and Harrison's too, in the desk in the west room."

"Well, what of it?"

"Look at them, Luke."

She laid them out on the table. There were one or two B's, several Incompletes, but nearly all his grades were A's.

He cleared his throat, and what he said surprised him.

"You say she had Harrison's. How were they—put up against these?"

"Whenever you tried at all," Margery told him, "whenever you took the interest to make the slightest effort, you did just as well as he did. Every single time."

It seemed strange to Luke that he had never known it before. So he had done as well in school, in a way, as Harrison; and now Harrison was a member of the New York bar. This was another new thought for him. It had been of no interest to himself alone, but it might be important to him and Margery.

ONE Sunday afternoon in May they walked down through the pasture, up the brook past the mill and the mill pond to Harrison's cabin—finished now, stained dark gray with barn-red door and shutters, waiting with the boulder and the hackmatack for Harrison and Inez to come back from Europe and their New York apartment—and on along a wood-chopper's trail through the Burnham wood-lot.

"How still it is," Margery said. "Listen!"

As if all the clocks had stopped.

"Probably they have," Luke suggested.

"No, they haven't. They never do. They keep right on, and if you think they do, you get just that far behind."

"Behind what?"

"Oh, the parade."

"I never liked parades."

"Oh, Luke, I loved them! The marching feet and the high-stepping horses, blaring music, drums, flashing horns; and you run until you pant, and you hold your side and keep on running, always holding your face turned up, letting the excitement blaze

down on it. For years I loved a parade more than anything else in the world."

Luke, looking at her, said slowly: "You funny little girl."

She began tying up mayflowers.

Then he said with difficulty: "Margery, if I could have any idea how I'd get along away from here, in a different kind of place—If I had any way of knowing—You see, I've always been here. As far as I was concerned, it was the world. I don't know that anybody ever fits in two different places—"

She bent over the flowers, her mouth quivering.

"Oh, I know, Luke, I know. You were all right. You were happy. After all, what more can anybody be? . . . I'm beginning to hate myself. What am I doing to you? Why can't I leave you alone? I don't want to hurt you, Luke!" She sprang up. "Oh, I'm going to get out of here. Don't touch me. I'm not going to stay near you. It's bad enough to poison myself—"

He took her by the shoulders as Jeff had done once, and for the same reason.

"Margery! Stop it! Listen to me. . . . Whatever you are doing is done. It isn't any use to run away now. We've got to straighten it out together. . . . Either you stay for my sake, or I go for yours. It's come to that pass. It's nobody's fault. It's just the way things work around. Now we both know you can't stay; you're not built for it. But I'm built for anything. I can manage it—if I can just see my way clear—"

She clung to him.

"Luke, that is true, isn't it? That's all the hope I have—that you *can* manage anything! You won't take it hard. You

don't get tangled and tied up. Anywhere you go, you'll be like a rock, and everything will dance around—just for your entertainment. You'll like people anywhere, Luke, and make a place for yourself anywhere. You're free. Nothing locks you in or locks you out!"

"One thing I want to know. While I'm making that place for myself, where will you be?"

"What—do you mean?"

"While I study architecture—or whatever—and work my way along and save and plan, what will you be doing? Will you get so far ahead of me I can't catch up?"

"Why, Luke Gilman!" She stood back, staring up at him. Her face filled with delight and fear, incredulity, tenderness and pride. He did not see how such a small face could hold so much. "Luke Gilman, you don't think for a minute—I'd let you do it alone! What do you think I am? If you leave here, I'll be going with you. That is, if you—"

"Go with me!"

"Well, as I say—if you—"

"But it won't be any use for me to think of locating in a place like New York! Not right away! I've only got a few hundred dollars saved, and I'll have to leave something with Mother—"

"Of course!"

"How would you study?"

"Don't worry about that; it can come later. We'll concentrate on your first."

"I don't know where we'd be—"

"I don't care, Luke. It doesn't make a bit of difference, as long as there is a college. I'll choose you a fine college, Luke. We'll find you a job—"

"I can always get a roof to shingle—"

"If nothing better!"

"I don't know what kind of a place we'll have to live in—"

"I'll make it a nice place, Luke."

"There won't be much to pay for it with. It will seem strange to figure on rent—"

"We'll pay the rent. You trust me. I'm a good manager. You work and study and turn into an architect, Luke. I'll see after all the rest."

"There may not even be so much to eat sometimes—"

"Yes, there will. You haven't any idea how far I can stretch a peck of potatoes and a bottle of milk—"

"But I want you to have tomatoes and meat!"

"We will. Sometimes. Later on. Don't you worry. I'll take care of everything. We'll do *beautifully*."

A little later he sent her home to tell his mother they would be married when school closed the next month. He said she would know better than he how to put such a thing, and he wanted to check the lines around the Burnham lot; it adjoined one of his father's on two sides; and when it came to sawing, as it might any time, the Gilman boys should know with certainty what was their own.

Chapter Three

THEY were not married, after all, in the middle of August. Jeff wrote Luke that the wedding was all right by him; he thought it was the best match he had ever heard of, the nicest girl, and the

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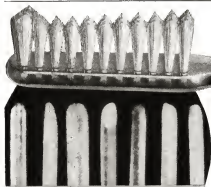


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finest fellow he knew, tying up: that was great news. But there must be no wedding until he could get home for it; and he could not finish where he was until early in August.

"We'll wait for Jeff," said Luke.

MARGERY made no objection; it was her feeling that it would be better if she and Luke were not married until it was time for them to leave. She did not want to live her first few months as Luke's wife in the Gilman house. She wanted their marriage to be the break. It would seem more natural, and she could begin at once to try to replace Derwich in Luke's life. This was what she must do, and if he never had both at the same time, it would be easier of accomplishment. She thought these things through as she listened to the June flies buzzing at the window behind her head, while the children swayed over their lessons, reaching incredible distances with their tongues in their concentration; and she thought of them on July nights when it was too warm to sleep in the corner room next to Grammum's. Sometimes she crept out of bed and knelt to think, her cheek on the cool window-sill.

"That you, Margery?"

"Yes, Grammum."

"Come in here."

"Can't you sleep, Grammum?"

"No. Don't expect to sleep again before fall. Plague take the hot weather! But you ought to be sleeping. You're no old woman like me. You'll have better things to do than sleep by the time it cools off. . . . What's the matter with you, anyway, child? What's fretting you?"

"Nothing—I guess."

"Thinking about Luke?"

"Sometimes I wonder if I can make him happy—enough."

"Pshaw, he'll be happy. He was born pleased with himself and the world he was getting into. I know. I was there. He didn't cry, no matter how much the doctor smacked him. At last I told the doctor: 'There, leave the young one alone; it aint natural to some folks to squizzle.' . . . Lord, I'll risk Luke. I don't doubt when he comes to die he'll forget what's happening to him, he'll lay there so interested in how a body lightens up as it casts off the things of this world, one after another—"

"Don't talk about dying, Grammum!"

"All right. Is don't s'pose 'tis natural you should be so interested in it as I be." Grammum pounded her pillows and pulled herself up on them. "Talk about living. That's going to be your business for a while. You don't need to worry about Luke; he'll make out. But how is it going to be with you? You going to keep on taking everything so hard? Because if you do, now mark me, you'll wear out in ten years. It wa'n't so intended anybody should make such a piece of work about every little thing—having a lover, falling in love, getting married—why!"

"Little things!"

"Well, so they are. Certain. Wait till you're eighty, and you'll say the same. Only you never will be if you keep on the way you've begun. You'll play out long before. . . . Want to know what's kept me above ground so long?"

Wedding, which loomed in Margery's mind, dwindled in Grammum's. To Gram-

mum now it was the matter of greatest pride that the thread of her life had not yet been cut off; she eyed her calendar with triumph every morning. To Margery, the thought of great age, for herself, was dreadful, but she respected and loved it in Lucy Wallace. She slid in under the quilted pink cambric spread and lay drowsily separating and stroking the strands of Grammum's fine, soft hair which shone faintly even in the night.

"What's kept me going," said Grammum, "was snatching up every scrap of fun I could spy as I went along. You know how a hen goes through the yard, her little black eyes darting and peering. The instant she sees anything she likes—snap, she's got it! She don't ask any questions or wonder and worry—snap, and down it goes! I've always been like that. It's the way to be. . . . Life's too short to weigh everything. . . . And a good many times anybody's scales are out of balance. You can't tell. Better just skip right along and take your chances. . . . Now here's something, Margery: You scared of getting married? I mean, of Luke?"

Thank God for the dark!

"Sometimes," Margery admitted.

"Hm," said Grammum. "I thought likely. Most girls are. Well, now here's something I want to tell you: Being wife to a man is fun, and try and get that into your head. It always puts me out so to think only bad girls know enough to know that. Love is just as much fun for a girl as for a man, or ought to be. It's always been so much fun that they had to make religious laws and government laws and heaven knows what else, to see there wasn't too much of it; and now the ones that keeps the laws the best have got all tangled up in them, and don't know how to take their pleasure when the time comes that the laws don't apply to them. Oh, dear, it does put me out so! It always has! You'll find women talk about these things, and you'll hear some of 'em talking so proud about how being married is always a kind of personal sacrifice for a nice woman. Oh, you'll hear 'em say so; but don't you think it! And don't you let Luke think it! . . . Love is for fun."

"Beautiful fun," said Margery.

"Or you can call it a game," Grammum told her. "But there comes an end to it, so you see you play it while you can. It's like sometimes when you're young you don't dance because you don't think you ought to, or don't think you know how; and then when you're so old nobody asks you, you think back over it and wish you could have just one more chance, so you could dance the heart out of you, dance for all you're worth, and have the good time to remember. But nobody gets but one chance to be young."

The next morning when Mary came in with a blue enamel basin and a pitcher of hot water, Margery Lee and Lucy Wallace were asleep with their heads on the same pillow—eighteen and eighty.

In the succeeding installments of this fine novel by the distinguished author of "As the Earth Turns," you will delight in many new friendships among its lovable characters.

DON'T TELEGRAPH—WRITE!

(Continued from page 55)

on the awnings over the shops and shadows on the sidewalks underneath.

I'd never seen Donald Meredith. I knew the Merediths by name. They've owned that big place out by the cove for several years, and come out summers pretty regular. When this boy came in, I said to myself: "My, what a nice-looking lad!" When you're forty, you notice such things—just as you do at sixteen and eighteen, but differently. He isn't much more than twenty, is he? Twenty-two at the most, I'd say.

I liked him the minute I saw him. Jim has blue eyes too, and that dark Irish hair. It's a combination no woman can resist.

I didn't know then who he was, but I went to the counter and said: "Can I help you?"

He said: "I want to send a telegram. Will you write it for me, please?"

I guess I must have looked oddly at him, for he moved and I saw the empty sleeve of his jacket. He smiled at me, faintly, and I went weak all over. He said: "I'm afraid I haven't learned to write with my left hand yet. Will you write it for me?"

"Yes," I said. "I'll be glad to. You just dictate to me."

I went back to the desk and slipped a blank into the typewriter. "Who is the telegram going to?"

He said: "To Miss Mavis Faile. Lake Fenwick, Illinois."

I automatically typed that. Then it clicked, and I looked up. He wasn't look-

ing at me. His eyes were cast down, and I could see the paleness of his face—the pallor that comes from being in a hospital. God knows I know it!

But that wasn't all. There was a twist to his mouth, and all of a sudden I got that new picture of you. The old one changed right away, and I was ashamed—terribly ashamed. I wanted to get up and go to him and say things. But the company tries its best to make us people who take and send messages impersonal—automatic. Jim says I'm a robot.

All I said was: "What is the message, please?"

He didn't answer for a moment. Then he said, and it was almost a gasp: "Say, 'Impossible to see you stop sailing for England tomorrow stop return doubtful.'"

I typed that and waited. Then I said: "Is that all?"

I looked up. He wasn't looking at me. I guess he was seeing you. His mouth moved, but he didn't say anything. I looked down at the typewriter. The keys were all jumbled. I heard him say: "Yes. Yes, thank you. That is all. Sign it 'Meredith.'"

But it was the sound of his voice, particularly when he added: "Will you please hold that so that it isn't delivered until tomorrow night? You can do it, can't you? I don't want it delivered until tomorrow night."

"Yes," I said, "I can do that."

I slipped the blank from the typewriter and brought it to the counter for him to

read. And while he read it, I kept my eyes on his face. There was that same look that I'd seen twenty years ago, Miss Faile, when my Jim came down the gangplank of the hospital ship. The look that was on Jim's face when he saw me and said: "I guess you don't want only part of a man, do you? It's all right with me." The same wonder and bitterness—the same bewilderment. The look men and children have for those they love, and fear to see changed by the change in themselves.

I could see you then, Miss Faile. See you the way I know you are. But I couldn't say anything to him—because he's only a man, and not my man. I knew he hadn't told you. I knew he was all wrong—knew everything he had been thinking and resolving. But I knew, too, just looking at him, the type of girl you must be for some one like that boy to love the way he does.

That's why I'm writing this letter. It's going by air-mail, special. You'll get it late tonight. If you take the morning plane, you'll be here long before the boat goes, long before I've even sent the wire. I don't have to say any more. I know what you'll do.

Sincerely,
Mary Smith.

P.S. It's his right arm. But don't you worry about that. Somehow Jim seems to hold me tighter with just the one than he ever did with both. I guess you'll find it like that too.



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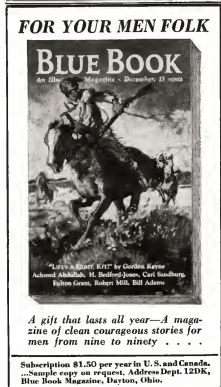
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TRIANGLE SQUARED

(Continued from page 59)

Cassaday was insane, and that the almost silent guests were his warders.

At last—at last came the expected interruption; but when it came Cassaday was so far gone with fatigue and alcohol that he failed, for a moment, to grasp its significance. A man of some forty years and assured manner came striding to the booth.

"Cassaday," he said, "you've done me a great service." My friend wondered who he could be. Then the newcomer turned to the others, who had risen to their feet, kissed the Woman, clung to her for a breathless moment, and turning, kissed the Man on the cheek in the French manner. Then Cassaday knew him for the Husband.

Cassaday was impressed. He knew him by reputation, as who did not. Everything about the Husband shouted authority—his full blue eyes, his broad brow, his square chin. Force, dignity, habit of command. He carried himself as one who had never known doubt, whose mind was beyond all changing. He beckoned Cassaday to one side as if the latter were a menial.

"You've done a splendid piece of work. The agency will pay you anything you want, up to ten thousand dollars. I think that's all." He shook hands heartily, but obviously in dismissal.

BUT Cassaday was astonished. "Look here. I can't leave just yet. Are you sure you can handle them alone? Won't you need me? It's still on their minds."

He looked my friend straight in the eye. "I'm not going to try to save them, if that's what you mean. I'm here to join them. The three of us are going out together, just as soon as it can be decently arranged. That was all I ever wanted it postponed for. Thanks for your part. Good night."

He shook hands again; this time Cassaday clung to his hand.

"No, you can't mean that. I kept these two persons alive for you through five hours of the worst mental torture a man ever lived through. It wasn't money that kept me at it. I did it to save their lives, to keep them from committing in cold blood a crime before God and man. I'd have given up a dozen times except for the thought that presently you would be here to help me save them. Now you say you're going with them. Three of you, three as sensitive, charming, useful persons as live on this earth! You can't mean it; it's insane."

The other tried to wring his hand free, but Cassaday held on. "You say my job's ended. It is, as far as that man and that woman are concerned. But I have no instructions covering you. In your case I'm a free man and a citizen, and a lawyer pledged by my oath to prevent crime. And I tell you that I won't let you kill yourself if I have to call in the whole police force of this town to stop you."

The Husband smiled, a lordly, forgiving smile.

"No one stops me for long. You might stop me for a little while, but I would win in the end. You're making a scene."

From their seats the Man and Woman sat rigidly watching.

"At least, at the very least," Cassaday insisted, "you owe me some consideration. I've fought and won a battle for you. It's taken a lot out of me; perhaps I'm not myself. You are putting a strain upon my memory that I can never live down, by making me a party to three unnecessary deaths. How can I go into a court again with clean hands if I am a party to that crime? That's the way I see it tonight. Perhaps by morning I'll see it differently. Yours is a tragic story. I have heard it all, and I'm not blaming you. No one blames you; you have been merciful. But your joining them is too much, after the struggle I've had. Promise me that at least you will wait until morning. Otherwise I'll never let go of you until the police take you in keeping."

The Husband looked at the lawyer's haggard face, and said lightly: "Oh, well; morning comes soon."

"Ten o'clock tomorrow," Cassaday demanded.

The Husband nodded and Cassaday released him. He took out his handkerchief and rubbed his pinched knuckles delicately. "How about dinner?"

"Not here. Of all places in the world, not here."

"Wherever you say."

Cassaday paid the bill, loaded his guests and their bags into his car and drove to a hotel in Albany, six miles through the cool autumn night. The keen air and the Husband's nonchalant manner eased the strain.

Cassaday was too fagged to go on talking after dinner, and suggested the theater. There was an opera company in town, with "Lucia di Lammermoor" the evening's offering. Cassaday noticed the Woman lift her eyebrows at the mention of the piece, but the significance of her look did not come home to him until the last act, in which Sir Edgar flamboyantly commits suicide. The Husband discussed the folly of emotionalism in suicide; the Man said nothing during the scene, but discussed it later; the Woman said nothing about it either then or later.

CASSADAY engaged a suite—though no one was intending to sleep. This was the last night: very well—eat, drink and be merry! Cassaday pretended merriment, sitting there with three persons who were determined to die on the morrow. If only he could get the Woman aside! Through the window Cassaday could see the clock on the City Hall tick off the minutes, hours. That clock has a habit of dropping its minutes by short jerks—each jerk was like a stab to him. There was a piano in the sitting-room. The Woman played; the Husband sang; then the three men sang, their arms around each others' shoulders, "Bright college days!"

Ghastly as it was, Cassaday felt the macabre fascination of the scene in which he was an actor.

The lawyer did not trust them fully; he feared the Husband might forget his promise when he had been drinking. Cassaday intended to keep awake all night. But weariness and alcohol overcame him. He slept, a deep, delicious sleep, a sleep heavy as death itself.

When he awoke, the warm sun was streaming in the window, the stabbing clock showed half-past eight, and he was alone. His guests had departed.

Cassaday hurried downstairs and made inquiries at the desk. Yes, they were in the dining-room. He thought: "I might have known the promise would be kept—they are that kind. Mad or sane, they are that kind."

Cassaday's frayed nerves drove him to the bar. As he stood there, he decided he must break this fatal triangle soon by taking this woman away from her two men. But how?

Under a glass cover on the bar lay some sandwiches. Something inside him spoke: "Bread. Bread and wine."

"Still white wine," he said to the bartender, "and pull the cork. Also sandwiches—bread. Bread and wine. Don't stare at me so. I'm not drunk. Bread and wine, as you're a Christian. And two of the thinnest, clearest glasses you have." The dazed bartender wrapped them up, and he stuffed the bundles into his overcoat pockets.

When Cassaday joined his guests at the breakfast-table, he had the curious feeling that he, a barbarian, was invading civilization. They were immaculate; he was the worse for wear. They were polite; he was impolite, hasty, ill at ease. They were in harmony; he knew that they had conferred and agreed; his was the lonely, tortured soul. It occurred to him then that perhaps, after all, death was the crowning act of civilization, that only barbarians savor life to the last. But he shook that off when the Husband, as he lighted his after-coffee cigarette, said, in

that assured, bantering way of his: "We're leaving at twelve o'clock!"

"Leaving?" Cassaday repeated. "You mean—"

The Husband nodded. My friend looked at the others. He thought the Man had a look of icy triumph in his gray eyes. The Woman was a shade paler than usual, but held her poise, like a still white piece of paper on which a death-sentence was being written in charcoal strokes.

"Now," said Cassaday to himself, "I must act. Thus far I have only talked." He pulled out his watch and looked at it for a full minute.

"All right," he said deliberately as the second-hand moved in its circle. "You have three hours to live. It is my duty, before God and the law, to stop you. I can do it by lifting my finger at the head waiter. There are detectives at his call, ready to rush in at his signal. I refrain from doing so on one condition."

The Husband spoke sharply: "Name it."

The lawyer took his time in replying. "The condition is that I have possession of this woman for the next three hours."

SILENCE fell upon the table. Cassaday looked out of the window. He had the impression they were communicating with each other without words, by telepathy, using a language without words, a language he would never know. He tried to imagine what was passing in their minds. He thought they were above putting the worst implications on his speech, but he could not be sure—both men loved her so, and they scarcely knew him. At least they must have thought that he would deliver her to the police and then

return for them. Minutes passed before the Woman said:

"Very well. I'm not afraid."

Cassaday gave them no time to reconsider. Swiftly he held her coat for her and ushered her from the dining-room, while the two men stood there disconcerted but still cool. He put her into a taxi and said: "Country Club." As they drove away, he saw the two men standing in the dining-room window, pale and tense, the Husband's hand on the Man's arm as if in restraint. They looked as men might look at the rail of a sinking liner watching the last lifeboat depart.

Near that country club there is a forest, where pines stand eighty feet tall on a hill carpeted with their needles—the Cathedral Woods. A holiness lingers there on a still sunny morning in autumn. Any sensitive person would feel it. Perhaps a woman would feel it more than a man.

In the center of this wood, Cassaday made his last stand.

"I brought you here because this is God's temple, not made with hands. You have only three hours to live. Let these be happy hours, so that in the long hereafter, if Buddha be wrong, if there be no complete break with what has gone on here, you will remember that Earth was once kind to you. You are free for three hours. If you want to pretend you are a little girl again, and run dancing and laughing down this slope, all right. If you want to bury your head in the pine needles and weep, all right. If you want to talk to me, to tell me anything that has been left unsaid, all right. If you want me to stay, I stay; if you want me to go, I go. These are your three hours."

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"Stay," she said quietly, and buried her head in the pine needles. Cassaday expected her to weep then, but she did not weep. For twenty minutes she lay there still as death, her slim, exquisitely molded body pressed to the carpeted earth. Cassaday saw that she loved the Earth Mother of us all: That gave him hope. He walked over the hill; it seemed a sacrifice to witness her embrace of Earth. Presently he heard the needles rustling, and saw her walking toward him. Suddenly she faltered, put her hand on a tree-trunk and slid to the ground at its base.

"Faint-hearted," she said as he ran up. "Faint and hungry."

He reached into his pockets. "Here is bread and wine."

She smiled wanly. "Bread and wine," she said—then, with a start: "Why, that's communion!"

As the wine slid into the shining slender goblet, she smiled. "Lovely glass. How beautiful it is here!"

Between sips she stroked the glass with her long fingers. Kneeling beside her, Cassaday broke bread with clumsy fingers and fed her as if she were a child. Symbols take hold of this friend of mine. He had won a point; Earth had won a point; life had won a point.

There on his knees Cassaday talked his heart out on the old faith of his fathers. He told her, as Mother Church had told him, that one's life is not one's own to take. That life, any life, is dear and irreplaceable in the sight of God. That suicide is theft, the meanest of crimes, as well as murder, the grossest. All else might be forgiven her, but never that.

A line came to him out of the Bible: "A three-fold cord is not quickly broken." But you are the key strand. Neither this Man nor your Husband will go, if you decide to live. Reflect on their talents, of the loss to a world where such men are scarce."

She shook her head, whether in despair or denial it would be hard to say. Then Cassaday began to talk of himself. He talked to that woman as if she were judge and jury trying himself for murder. He thinks it was his plea for mercy that broke her will:

"If you go as you intend, you make me party to a triple murder. Without will or

desire of my own, as a soldier goes to battle on order, my life has touched yours for a day. Now I am in your power for the rest of my life, and as I do verily believe for eternity also. Kill yourself, and you kill not only these men who have known your body and soul. You also kill me, the best part of me, my self-respect and self-confidence. I've known only your headstrong will, not your lovely body and shining soul; yet you would snap my love in two as I snap the stem of this glass."

"Oh, you've broken it."

"Yes," replied Cassaday, "it is broken. The shards will lie here, useless and dangerous, for years. That's how you're breaking me. I ask you to spare me, for I must go on living. I dare not die. How I live depends on you, you alone. Save me whole and straight, unbroken, useful according to my powers. It you will not live for the sake of your husband and this other man, then live for my sake until God claims and redeems you in His own way."

The sight of her sifting pine-needles through her fingers broke Cassaday's control. He took her by the shoulders and shook her. At his touch she broke into tears. He kissed her tears away. God will forgive those kisses—there was no desire in them. At least so Cassaday says, and I believe him.

Presently he looked at his watch. It was twenty-minutes to twelve. He helped her to her feet, and they walked down the hill hand in hand to the rustic bridge over the Dark Tarn. She leaned on the rail and gazed at the brown, leaf-flecked water.

"It would be sweet to die," she said, "But you have made it impossible. At any rate for the present. I make no promises. Perhaps later."

"Never," he said. "You cannot desert while I am on your conscience."

AT the hotel she told her husband and the Man: "We are going to the Vermont farm for three weeks."

Cassaday slipped away as quickly as he could.

Back in the office he called his chief and reported. "They won't stick it," the Chief declared cynically. "They're no good and never will be. Better out of the way

and forgotten. You've been wasting your time. Wait and see."

Cassaday never saw any of them again. She never wrote him a letter. But whenever Frost brought out a book of poems, my friend could depend upon receiving a copy from her, with marked passages. One or two of them came from strange places—Malta, Persia.

Then after five years had run their courses, she called him to her death-bed. He couldn't go. The call came when his wife was desperately ill. The Woman's child lived—a boy with gray eyes and brown hair. By her will, Cassaday became his guardian. I suppose she reasoned that unless he had saved her, there would have been no child, no responsibility. Cassaday says the Husband and the Man are still friends, though the Man has gone back to Peru.

Of course Cassaday is sure his chief was wrong; they were worth saving. He counts the saving of them the best work he ever did. . . .

"I've often wondered," said he, "just what was in her mind when she marked this passage in the first book of Frost's that she sent to me."

I took the book from his hand and read:

Some one who loved in turning to fresh tasks

Could so forget his handwork on which

He spent himself, the labor of his ax,

And leave it there far from a useful fireplace

To warm the frozen swamp as best it could

With the slow smokeless burning of decay.

"It's fairly clear to me," I said. "You were the woodsman, she the wood left forgotten after you had hewed it to your measure."

Cassaday sighed. There are overtones and undertones in a sigh as well as in a poem.

I resisted an impulse to add: "Of course, the Woman left the boy to you to keep a channel open between her soul and yours, in case death should fail to provide the complete break with earthly existence which Buddha promises."

Cassaday may have played with that thought himself; but certainly he would not want anyone else to play with it.

NOTHING TO GET MAD ABOUT

(Continued from page 47)

"Well, speaking of minding your own business—" begins Lucy; and we were at it hot and heavy.

Of course it was cockeyed, but I began seeing green about Lucy and Mr. Mertan. Yes, I said it was cockeyed. Only I was clean gone on Lucy by then, and a guy in that condition isn't liable to be level-headed. He can see things going on between his sweetie and a lamp-post, if he starts looking.

You'll get a laugh, but I began snooping and spying around the office like a regular *Hawshaw*. And you know, it's funny, but the thing that grabbed me worst was the way Lucy'd act when she first came out from a session in Mr. Mertan's room. She'd be sort of quiet. Quiet elegance, that's the word. Not snooty—just quiet elegance. Well, of course, Lucy is always a lady—a little queen, the

way I said. But up home in the Bronx she wasn't such an all-fired lady as all that. I thought she was putting it on.

Snooping and spying is a sure way to get into trouble. I did.

It was one night when I'd been on a run to Philadelphia. I'd bought supper on the train coming back, on the expense-account, and I stopped by the office to leave my samples. The place was mostly dark. Way down the main hall, I saw a crack of light under Mr. Mertan's door.

The boss was there, and I was willing to bet Lucy was too. They often worked after hours, but this was good and late. Maybe eight o'clock.

Well sir, it makes me hot all over to think about it now. But I'm telling you I marched down that hall and opened that door, and crashed right in. Something must have come over me, I guess.

Mr. Mertan had been walking up and down the floor the way he does when he's dictating. Lucy was sitting by the desk under the lamp. I can see the light shining on her hair—I can see it right today.

"Lucy," I said, and I could sort of hear my own voice saying it, "you're coming with me. I'm going to be your husband and you're quitting any job where there's night work; you're quitting, starting now."

Of course I didn't exactly have any right to spring that husband gag. At least I knew I was going to be her husband, but she hadn't said anything but *no* so far.

Lucy looked at me, and her voice was just as quiet and steady as her look: "I'll never marry you nor anyone like you. And you know I've never given you any right to say a thing like that."

"Sure," I said, "let's talk about having rights." And I swung around on Mr. Mer-

tan. "You're a married man. And what you haven't got any right to do is make this girl think you—" And I stopped dead. It was Mr. Mertan's face stopped me. If I've ever seen a blank look, he had it. There wasn't anything phony about it, either. Some ways Mr. Mertan is smooth, but not the liar kind of smooth. He just didn't know what I was talking about. And then, when he tumbled, he stared at Lucy like he'd never seen her before.

But he got hold of himself before I did. "You had probably better see me in the morning rather than now. Good evening."

And I went. Yes sir, I stuck my tail between my legs and went. I'm not scared of any man. But Mr. Mertan didn't have to tell me I'd been a fool. His face had already told me.

Gosh, I felt terrible. Mr. Mertan isn't the kind of a guy that makes love to his stenog and kisses the parlor-maid. He wouldn't do it. There couldn't be anything between him and Lucy, and if I hadn't've been crazy, I'd have known it. I'm telling you, I felt terrible.

I WAITED in the general office for Lucy. I waited a good long time, too. I didn't even try to figure what they were saying in there. I just waited.

Lucy came down the hall, and she had her hat in her hand, and she headed for the mirror by the water-cooler like she always did at quitting-time. I was ready to take my beating. She didn't say a word. When I leaned around a little, I could see she'd been crying, so I quit staring.

But she turned right toward me. The tears were rolling down her face, and she wasn't doing anything about it. I didn't know what way to look. I put on the best grin I could and waved a flipper at the hat she'd been fussing with.

"Gee, Lucy," I said, "some class to you."

"Yes," she said. Her voice was kind of funny and small. "Some, but not enough."

I didn't waste time trying to figure that one out. I just started to tag along after her. But by the door she looked at me again. The tears were still trickling down.

"Please not now, please leave me alone tonight," she said.

Of course usually a guy doesn't pay any attention to a gag like that. Only it was my night for eating humble-pie. I said, "Sure. Sure, Lucy kid," and let her go.

Lucy wasn't at the office next morning but I was. When I'm wrong, I don't run away from admitting it. I went right into the boss.

"I've got to apologize to you, Mr. Mertan," I said.

He gave a little nod. "We can forget that. But let's be quite sure we have everything straight. Can you accept my word as a gentleman that I had no thought—"

"I could see it on your face. I mean sure, Mr. Mertan, I can take your word. We're okay then. And I'll get my stuff together and get out this morning."

"I hope you won't wish to do any such thing. Miss Owen did prefer to leave, but if she plans to marry soon, it's probably just as well."

That's the kind of a guy Mr. Mertan is, you see. He didn't fire me, and he didn't ever ride me. He said we could forget it, and he forgot it.

(Please turn to page 127)

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For charm, there is no prescription: it is a gift bestowed upon the lucky by an unreasonable fairy godmother. If you have it, you know it, and nothing need be done about it save to use your power. If you have it not, there is plenty to be done about it. Thought and hard work go far to make up for inherent charm. Don't fret about it, but do something about it.

If I were offering you a prescription for popularity, I would tell you to learn how to do as many things in association with people as you can possibly master. Whenever a new name is mentioned, somebody is sure to ask: "What is his bating average? What can he do?"

Nobody wants a dud around. When your hostess asks, "Can you play games?" and you shake a heavy head, and say, "No, I never cared for games," when she says, "You like picnics?" and you answer, "I've never gone in for picnics; I'd rather stay home and read a good book,"—she wants nothing so much as your absence.

Learn to like doing things. Be positive about what you like. Being positive helps people to know how to get along with you. Anybody can learn to do some one thing well. You can learn to listen, if you cannot tell a story dramatically enough to make it go.

Listeners are always in demand. You can learn how to play games, or put on an act, or make a fire, or dance a hompipe. You can learn to watch for opportunities to make yourself useful if not entertaining. If you do what your hands find to do, you will lift yourself off the necks of other people, and they will be grateful for it.

This means learning how. Let no chance of learning how to do things pass without your eager attention. Watch and listen and try. Nothing is too insignificant for the learner to note. Each little addition of skill or knowledge will color your personality, and that color is what is usually called charm.

"What is your line?" asked one social aspirant of another. "I'm the universal cheerer-upper," said the blithe young thing. "Whenever I see a grouch, I beam upon it, I coo to it, feed it, sleep it, drive it, listen to it, sing to it, do it to a turn whatever and wherever it happens to be. What's yours?"

I would advise all you young people who long to make a splash in the social sea, to learn how to do as many things as possible, to know how to please as many people as possible, to be the delightful person you wish to be as nearly as possible every day you live. If you practise gracious thinking, gracious doing, gracious living, you will be popular beyond your hungriest wish.

What can you do? For your own sake, go ahead and do it.

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Sarasota, FLORIDA

(Continued from page 121)

Of course I married Lucy all right. But she held out until she had me plenty worried, no kidding. She never did blow me up about the way I went busting into Mr. Merton's room, so I guess she was pretty mad.

She hasn't been near the office since, and she always says she isn't interested. But a guy can't help talking about his work sometimes and I notice she usually listens.

In fact, that's what started things last night. I was talking about Mr. Merton's new secretary, and I happened to mention

she was nice-looking. Well, you know what wives are. Hubby isn't supposed to know if there's a nice-looking girl in the office. I told Lucy she ought to know I'd never look at anybody but her. I'm crazy about her. Besides, the new girl is no red-hot baby doll. I told Lucy she ought to know Mr. Merton would pick a nice girl, not one of those blonde sirens.

And right while I'm talking, Lucy walks over to the cupboard and pulls out a whole stack of dishes and lets them crash on to the floor. They were our best set of dishes too—the ones Mr. Merton sent us when I told him I'd made the grade with Lucy.

GETTING AWAY FROM IT ALL!

(Continued from page 29)

I was talking about the minstrel boys in Trinidad harbor. Well, the cruise-director went to the rail of the tender, and stopped their lusty island song and said: "Sing something else. How about, 'The Music Goes Round and Around?'"

A meek little school-teacher lady whom we had never met before—this meek little lady went for him. "Shut up!" she cried. "Let them sing whatever they want to sing! What business is it of yours?"

He went away, and the boys went right back to "Mama No Like."

We liked Trinidad and we liked La Guayra in Venezuela. We liked the terrifying journey by train—an hour and a half of it—up the Andes from La Guayra to Caracas. We liked Cartagena in the Colombian Republic, for it was a very beautiful city, wearing upon its modern face the sword-marks of old Henry Morgan: buccaneering brute, lady-killer of the most exalted rank, murderer, philanthropist, warrior and British hero.

We liked Panama, I think, the most of all. It was the first American-run colony which any of us had ever seen, and we were immensely pleased with the way that America runs a colony. The world rings with the romantic tale of superbly run British colonies, and I wish that somebody of my craft would give our own people their due—but that is for tomorrow's tomorrow. I want to say, here, that Panama is a grand and very beautiful place; that the man who does not pay his twelve dollars and fifty cents for a round-trip flight by airplane along the line of the canal, Cristobal to Panama City, is very stupid indeed; that the gal who does not spend her last penny in the shops along Front Street in Colón is a penurious hussy who doesn't know a bargain when she sees one.

After Panama, Havana.

What, now, is the use talking about Havana? As well try to capture Paris or New York or Naples in a flimsy paragraph. There was one night—

How insane it would be to try to go into that.

AFTER Havana, four days of the sea, and home.

You observe, it was not many ports we made. But if you ever get yourself off upon one of these junkets I suggest that you be wary of a trip which embraces too many ports. The essence of the thing is the leisure—*dolce far niente*—the pleasure of doing nothing. You will be thrown into a company of people, for better or

for worse; and the majority of them will be people you do not in the least want to know or even see—just as you yourself will be highly annoying to many of your companions of the ship. But you will find your friends. And nearly all the fun will be dawdling with those friends over the most trifling enterprises.

We had tea one afternoon with the captain. We spent a few hours going with the chief engineer through the bowels of the ship. We got to be pretty good friends with the purser.

The purser had some grand stories to tell. He did not tell them as grand stories, but as shocking incidents in his life. He was much distressed as he talked. He did not understand our ribald laughter:

"They cannot understand at all," he said, "that the purser is an officer. They want to give him money! One day, last voyage, I changed a cabin for a woman. There were a dozen people waiting outside my office while I did the change for her on my charts, and when I told her it was done, she went quickly to the door and shut it. Then she came to me and handed me twenty dollars. I told her I did not wish the money. She insisted. I gave it firmly to her. She finally left. A little later, she sent down the money by her cabin steward with a letter apologizing for her conduct in shutting the door and embarrassing me. Of course, she said, I had to make the gesture of refusing under the circumstances."

"I took a piece of my personal stationery. I happen, you see, to be a baron. I wrote on that stationery that I could not take the money, but since she was so anxious to get rid of it, it would go into the Seamen's Fund."

Again, he had been bathing one day—his bath was beyond his bedroom, which in turn was beyond his sitting-room and office. He was in the tub when, to his consternation, a man bent over him. The man had a five-dollar bill in his hand and bent down, saying: "Take this and buy yourself a hat."

"My heavens! What could I do in that position?"

What he did was to lose his temper for the only time since he has been in the purser's uniform. He rolled the bill into a ball and threw it out the port-hole and yelled to the man to get out and get out quick.

We listened to a lot of stories from the purser, and we told a few ourselves. . . . Until at last it was time to think about

Statement of the Ownership, Management, Circulation, Etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912,

of REEDBROOK MAGAZINE published monthly at Dayton, Ohio, for October 1st, 1918.

Before me, a Notary in and for the State of New York and County aforesaid, personally appeared John D. Hartman, who, being duly sworn according to law, depose and say that he is the Assistant Manager of Reedbrook Magazine, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication, for the date shown and belied, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 1103 of the Public Laws of the United States on the receipt of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, The McCall Company, 230 Park Avenue, New York, N. Y.; Managing Editor, None; Business Managers, None.

2. That the owners are: The New Publishing Company, Wilmington, Delaware; McCall Corporation, Wilmington, Delaware. (Owner of The New Publishing Co. stock).

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John D. Hartman, Assistant Treasurer.
Sworn to and subscribed before me on the 24th day of September, 1918. Frank H. Murray, Notary Public, New York County, New York County Clerk's No. 586, New York County Clerk's Office, 100 City Hall, New York City, March 30, 1918.

packing up our bags again, and preparing to make our way past Sandy Hook, up the Lower Bay with Coney Island off to starboard, past Quarantine, and the Narrows, through the Upper Bay and past old Liberty standing there in her green robes, back home again.

WE were back home again. We were blue about it, too. The memories of those careless days and nights filled us with a perverse nostalgia as we fell once more into the regimen of workaday life: the memories of blue seas and glittering skies, of distant beaches and chattering strange tongues were etched so profoundly upon our minds that we could not shake them off lightly, even amid the secure pleasures of familiar and well-loved scenes.

We had been back about a week when my wife said, a little warily: "You know, I have an idea."

I said: "What?"

She said, "Let's call up and reserve that same cabin for that same trip next year."

I wanted to know if she really meant it, and she did. And so, with that notation upon the books of the shipping company, there is a very good chance that my malady-of-travel will lie dormant for a while. It is something that is in the future, and certain, and so the restlessness will probably be stilled thereby. Perhaps that was her idea when she made the suggestion!

"Don't worry about me—it's just a Cold"



Just a cold now—but it may lead to influenza or pneumonia which, on an average, cause 125,000 deaths each year in the United States. About half of these deaths occur in December, January, February and March.

THE common cold is bad enough in itself. But the real danger is that it may blaze the trail for more serious diseases or reduce your resistance to their attacks.

Before you realize it, what you think is just a "cold" may develop into influenza or even pneumonia. Don't forget that pneumonia may also start suddenly, even without a cold.

The first symptoms of pneumonia are usually chilliness or a severe chill, pain in the chest or side, headache, cough, and fever. Such symptoms mean that not a second should be lost. Go to bed and send for your doctor. Remember that pneumonia is a communicable disease. Proper nursing, complete rest and reasonable isolation are absolutely essential.

Lobar pneumonia is caused by many different types of the pneumonia germ—but each type is specific and can be identified. Should anyone in your family have pneumonia, your doctor will probably arrange for an immediate laboratory examination of the sputum to determine which type of pneumonia is present.

Serums are available which are highly effective in

treating certain of the types. Not all cases of pneumonia should have serum treatment. Your doctor will decide.

Pneumonia is a serious infection, but with the increasing defenses, medical scientists hope to reduce its heavy toll. During the next four months it will do the most damage to those who are not on guard. If your physical resistance is lowered by overwork or unusual fatigue, too little sleep, overindulgence in food or drink, or exposure to cold and wet, pneumonia germs may gain quick headway.

At this time of the year it is a wise precaution to have your doctor look you over very carefully to see whether or not you have diseased tonsils, sinuses, adenoids, teeth or other physical impairments which may lower resistance.

You will be much safer during the coming winter months if you keep your vitality high.

Send for the Metropolitan's booklet, "Colds, Influenza, Pneumonia," which contains valuable information about the prevention and care of these diseases. Address Booklet Department 1236-R.



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Second Honeymoon

by

PHILIP WYLIE



The
brilliant
author of "Too Much
of Everything" stages this
gay and sophisticated romance against
the glamorous background of pleasure-mad Florida.

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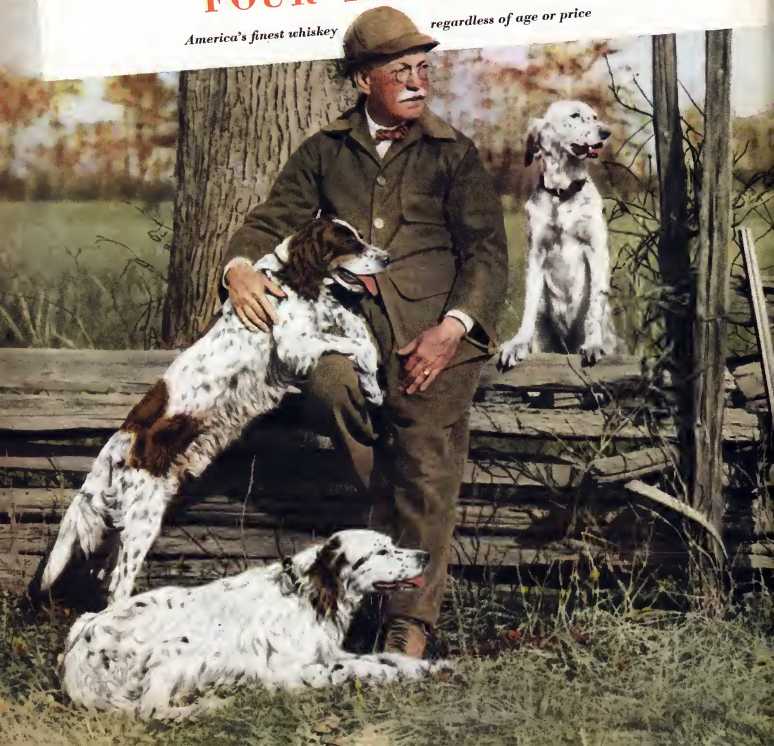


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REDBOOK'S NOVEL OF THE MONTH

Second Honeymoon

by

PHILIP WYLIE



ELLO, Vicky!"

The voice impaled her against the night.

"Hello, Raoul."

"Is that all you're going to say? Just—'Hello'?"

"I didn't know you were in Miami."

He chuckled. "Neither did I—till about noon. Not for sure, that is."

Vicky's voice was soft, sad, distant. "Still—drinking?"

"No more. No less. Hereditary. Father—"

"I remember." She sighed. "Your father drank a pint of whisky every day of his life, and died at the age of seventy-three trying to learn to fly a plane."

"Exactly." He came nearer to her, and leaned on the balustrade. He allowed a space for the dance orchestra to play in. Moonlight, sifted by palm fronds, fell upon them like powdered sugar. "I didn't know you were in Miami, either."

"We came yesterday."

"Cigarette?"

"I—all right. Thanks." She remembered the silver case. Inscribed in it were the words, "*Awarded to Raoul McLiesh to Express Our Relief at His Graduation—The Editorial Board.*" They'd given it to him in college. He'd been planning then on a career as a newspaper editor. That was, in essence, why she had divorced him: he always planned—he always showed promise: but he never did anything. Just—laughed. Made jokes. Waved good-by, and turned up in Cairo or Tokyo, and laughed again. Raoul had too much money.

He held the match for her and looked at her face. Then he held it near his own. The same black, mischievous eyes. The same unequal brows—one curved handsomely and the other lifted in perpetual sardonic inquiry. The same mobility of his mouth below his exact mustache. And he was very tanned. Raoul always managed to wear the sun.

"Your husband's—inside?"

She nodded.

"What's his name?"

"Hendon."

His voice, forever bantering, entertained. "Has a sturdy ring. Hendon. Christened?"

"What? Oh." She wanted to laugh. "Bob."

"Nice?"

"Grand!"

"That's dandy! Though—he'd have to be. Dependable—huh?"

It made her shaky. A thousand times, after her second marriage, she had imagined meeting Raoul again. She would be dignified. She would radiate the assurance her more reliable husband had given her. She'd say, "Oh, hello!" and laugh—down the scale. "Why, Raoul! It's like old times."

That was the trouble. It was too much like old times. Besides, she'd invariably pictured that re-meeting as taking place at a party, not in the moonlight. She yanked at her emotions. "Don't feel sorry for yourself. You'll like Bob. Come on inside and see."

"I'd rather not."

"Why? Bob won't mind. He's always wanted to meet you!"

"I like it out here."

"Don't be silly!" She took his arm. The sooner she escaped from the balcony, the sooner she'd recover from surprise and the disconcerted perfume that accompanied it.

They opened a French window and went into the casino. Music surged across the dance-floor. She led him through a maze of tables. They sat down at an unoccupied one. Melting ices, empty brandy-glasses, crumpled napkins said that three other people were away dancing.

Two returned presently: a good-looking blonde girl, an impressive man—a man with a massive bald head, a thin mouth, and a nose like the beak of a strange South American bird.

Raoul didn't see their approach. He was still staring at his former wife—critically.

Vicky said: "Marcia! Herbie! Look what I've found! My first husband!"

"My God! Raoul McLiesh!" Marcia yelled.

Raoul turned in his chair. He gave tongue to a weird cry which he vibrated by slapping his hand over his mouth. An Indian cry.

Marcia returned it.

Vicky was disappointed. They knew each other. Raoul had that in common with Bob. Both men knew everybody.

People were turning toward the table. That did not interrupt Marcia and Raoul. Still giving the Indian cry, they hopped toward each other on one foot, hopped around each other—back to back—and when they were again facing, they stamped hard on the floor.

The bald man had watched tranquilly. Marcia turned to him when the ceremony was ended. "Herbie," she said to Raoul. "He's my husband."

Raoul held out his hand. The two men clasped strongly and quickly. "A Hopi custom," Raoul explained. "I used to know your wife—in Arizona."

"Anyway"—Vicky felt disheveled—"let's sit down."

Marcia snatched a spoon, took a mouthful of lemon ice, and pointed at her husband. "Raoul! We're on our honeymoon. Still! Just got back from Manchukuo. Cold as ice! Isn't Herbie marvelous? Went there on business. He's an engineer. All brain. Sapped his hair follicles. You'll like him."

Funny, Vicky thought. She and Bob and the Grosses had been enjoying a perfectly routine evening at a nightclub. Then Raoul came—and immediately people began whooping, and hopping around on one foot.

"My wife," said Herbert Kenyon Gross, speaking for the first time, "counterbalances—my mentality."

Raoul's nod was as grave as a consulting physician's. "I know. Low-grade moron. Even the Hopis despaired of her."

"I'm teaching her to read," Gross continued.

"Good," said Raoul.

"And print capital letters."

"Any progress?"

"We're up to 'H.' Only six months of effort."

Vicky touched Raoul's sleeve. "There's Bob," she whispered.

He looked out on the dance-floor. "Hmmm," he said. "Five eleven; a hundred and seventy; gray at the temples. Double-breasted dinner jacket. Eyes, slate; broad shoulders. Looks like a Yale man."

"Class of Twenty-one."

"Is he a light sleeper?"

"What?"

"Never mind. Who's the girl?"

"Mrs. Ellis."

"Pretty—in a snide way. Don't despair, though. She hasn't any chic."

"For goodness sake, Raoul, do you realize that you were once my husband? That Marcia and Herbie are two of my best friends? That this is a party? That—" She was trying to tell him to quit being silly.

He looked alarmed. "Have I said the wrong word? Buttered an orchid? Something?"

"Can't you say you're glad to see me? Tell me where you've been? What you've been doing? Can't you, for once—"

"I'm delighted to see you! I've been—in various places: Brazil—Berlin—Batavia—Uruguay. Just came from there. Got out in the nick of time. The nick! I haven't been doing anything. Sitting in steamer chairs. On Graf Zeppelins. Things." He glanced up and went on talking. "Hello, Bob. I'm Raoul—Raoul the Dispossessed. Vicky's already trying to pin me down."

Bob's face was perplexed only for an instant. Then it broke into a beaming grin. "McLiesh! By God! An occasion!" He wheeled for an instant. "Waiter! Champagne! Vicky, you never told me that he looked like Ronald Colman!"

"But more sinister," Raoul said.

They shook hands.

MARCIA and her astonishing-looking husband glanced at each other for a split second. Their eyes privately congratulated Bob. Not every man is able to appear genuinely delighted to meet his wife's first husband.

Vicky's confusion increased. She had said that Bob would like Raoul. She had known it to be true. But now, the accomplished fact annoyed her. A moment of hostility, ever so slight, on the part of either one, would have somehow refreshed her.

"Of all the men I've ever wanted to meet, you are the foremost," Bob was saying. "Of course, this isn't the time or the place—but I want to ask you some questions. For example, what did you do when she brooded?"

Raoul eyed Vicky as if to restore his memory. "Beat her."

"And when she snapped?"

"Locked her in the clothes-hamper."

"That's very good! And when she threw things?"

"That's a new development. I don't know. Of course, I did find that a paper bag full of ice-water tossed over the banister at an unsuspecting moment would—"

They laughed. Bob put his arm around Raoul's shoulder and made him sit down again. The waiter brought the champagne. Glasses were filled.

Bob lifted his. "Well—"

Raoul looked at Bob's wife—the girl who had been his. The same rare metals in her golden hair, the same luminous eyes—angry now. The same lips and fingers and sensitive shoulders. "To—Vicky!"

He was a nice guy, Raoul thought. . . .

An hour later Raoul McLiesh unlocked the door to his suite in the hotel and walked in. He was whistling gayly. When he entered, a young man in a neat gray suit hopped out of a chair and stood at attention—as if Raoul were his superior officer. He was an anemic young man with watery eyes which by no means converged. The posture of attention was unnatural to him, for his chest was meant to be concave. Large knees had bagged his trousers. His hair was a bleached whisper. And his voice, when he had wagged his Adam's apple and found courage to speak, was meekness itself. "Good evening, sir," was the full extent of the remark for which he had summoned nerve.

"Good evening, the MacTavish," Raoul replied. "Are we packed?"

"Yes sir."

"Unpack."

"Yes sir."

"Have you bought tickets?"

"Yes sir."

"Cash them in."

"Yes sir."

"That will be all, the MacTavish."

The MacTavish stood with forlorn dignity. "Is the raccoon also staying?" he asked finally.

"Raccoon?" Raoul seemed to be at a loss. "I recall no raccoon, the MacTavish."

"It came a moment ago, sir. By messenger."

"Where is it?"

"Under the bureau, sir."

Raoul dropped quickly to his hands and knees. "So it is. Any card?"

"Yes sir. Mr. Robert J. Hendon."

Raoul stood up. "I see. We left the Casino awhile ago. I took a stroll. Fellow of parts, evidently. Do you know anything about raccoons, Mac?"

"Yes sir."

"You do?" I should have realized it. What do you know?"

The MacTavish, flushing with pleasure at being addressed as "Mac," stuttered for a moment. Eventually he began a story: "On my father's farm in Montana—you will recall my mentioning my father? I referred yesterday shortly after you hired me to the fact that he was a direct descendant of the MacTavish? We experimented toward the middle of the nineteen-twenties with various sorts of fur-farming. We had, at one time, some three dozen raccoons—thirty-eight, if I remember correctly—and I learned then something about their diet. As you doubtless know, the raccoon is a nocturnal carnivore. It—"

"Will it trouble us—much?"

"I can make arrangements, sir."

"Splendid. We'll keep him."

The MacTavish flushed more deeply, and his voice was the sigh of a zephyr caressing moss. "Her, sir."

"Ah? I wonder if Bob knew that! Anyway—we'll keep her until I can return the courtesy. Do they lead well?"

"I'm afraid not, sir. With training, perhaps—"

"All the better. She'll crawl up people. Bite them. May be a useful gift—the cad! What'll we call her?"

"Euphrosyne is a rather pretty name—or Proserpine—"

"Euphrosyne! Now—I'm staying, Mac, because my ex-wife's present husband has asked me to go fishing tomorrow. There are some people here too, called the Grosses. An ample blonde I like. And a bald man who is some sort of engineer. Locomotive, production, sanitary—I—"

"His picture was in the Miami Record this morning, sir. He is a civil engineer. His father built the Bonyaputski Dam in Russia. He assisted. He has a Ph.D. from Harvard. He was offered a Cabinet post in two past administrations. He has just returned from a commission for the Japanese. He characterized Miami as, 'Bully.' He—"

"You have already made yourself indispensable, Mac."

VICKY stretched. The gesture was becoming to her. It slid the sleeves of her pajamas down her arms, leaving them bare. It lifted her chest and tossed back her hair. It was all that she had intended it to be: provocative and defiant.

"You both treated me like a chattel," she said.

Bob regarded himself in a mirror. He was wearing only his shorts. "A woman," he quoted, "is a sometime thing."

"Of course, it was very funny."

"The most entertaining bird I've ever met. After spending a little time with him, I can't see why you left him. Hilarity from morning to night—"

"Bob! Do you really think that?"

He flexed his muscles. "No, dear."

"Because if you did—"

"I'm on a vacation. There's room in my life for a playboy."

She curled up her toes and gave them a nasty stare. She felt ill-used. "I couldn't sober him when we were married." An idea in the form of a suitable taunt entered her head. "Maybe I could now. He wouldn't have so much authority. As a matter of fact, for ten cents, I'd—"

Bob yawned. "You'd what?"

"I'd go to work on him."

"The woman who has let a bygone be a bygone doesn't live."

"You think I couldn't?"

He shook his head. He appeared to be giving the conversation very little attention. "I don't see why you want to. He's O.K. as is."

"He's a waster and a clown. He never does anything worth while. He—"

Bob sat down on the bed and put his hands on Vicky's smoothly curved shoulders. "Whom do you love?"

She was satisfied. But she didn't want to show it too readily. "I'm going to have a long talk with him."

"He seems to do the talking, generally."

It was a good tactic to refer again to Raoul. It forced Vicky to bring the focus of attention back to themselves. She slid deeper into his arms. "Oh, Bob, I'm so glad that you and I found each other! I despised living the way I did! I love living the way we do! I love you! I love our house! I love our plans! I love this vacation with you! I love you!"

He kissed her.

The wind from the sea brought to their Spanish hotel bedchamber the mournful cry of a buoy that rocked in warning—cumbersome, everlasting, on the reckless water.

Chapter Two



HERE was too much sunlight.

Marcia Gross and her husband were rolling along the boardwalk in a super-perambulator, an adult baby carriage, which was pushed by a negro in gold braid. The "boardwalk" was actually made of cement, so that the hurricanes which might come in the autumn could not wash it away.

Marcia was wearing a white felt hat about a yard wide with a crown no more than an inch and a half high, and her blonde hair gushed from beneath it. She knew she looked like sin, but it was the mode. Her husband sat on the small of his back in order not to interfere with the brim of the hat, and he seemed alert and pleased with life.

"Because we're so obviously rich," he said to his wife, "nobody has the sense to notice how comical we are."

"My hat thanks you," Marcia replied with dignity.

"If you had a lorgnette—"

"I have."

"And I had a monocle—"

"Then what?"

"We could do a vaudeville act."

Marcia took her lorgnette from her handbag. She set it before her eyes and gazed at her mate. "You look like a stork," she said finally.

He glanced at her hair. "And you look like a syrup waterfall."

"Or a turtle."

Herbert bowed to two elderly women riding in a similar vehicle in the opposite direction. "Mrs. Shaw," he murmured. "Mrs. Beacon."

They nodded.

"Who are the crones? Women from your past?"

"I don't know," he replied. "But as long as you carry a lorgnette, we'll be obliged to speak to people of that sort." They passed a row of store show-windows on one hand, and cabanas along the beach, on the other. "I can understand," he continued, "your wanting to spend the maximum amount of money for the minimum amount of bathing-suit. It's the peacock in you. A peacock spreads his tail because he knows a goat has no such appurtenance. And I dare say he exhausts himself holding the iridescent fan open in the hope that a goat will go by. But that hat is not iridescent. It looks like the bottom of a bathtub."

Raoul McLiesh walked up behind them. He was wearing shorts and rubber beach-shoes and a terry-cloth robe—*en route* to the swimming pool. He observed his friends in the perambulator before they saw him. He caught the negro's eye. He laid his finger over his lips. From his pocket he fished a ten-dollar bill. He presented it to the negro and motioned him to depart. The negro gave a grin that was like an ear of corn, and transferred the carriage-handle without interfering with its even pace. Raoul pushed ahead, listening with interest.

"A turtle," Marcia was saying, "—the bony head, the bony beak, the thin mouth, the oversized body: loggerhead, snapping, hawksbill—I'm not sure which. But you do look like a turtle. It's hard to kiss a man who looks like a turtle."

"People with too much hair are always jealous of the bald."

"A lovely morning," she answered.

They watched a fat woman in an outdoor shower. They watched a life-guard, who was inspecting the tattooing on his arms—to see, apparently, if it was still there.

"How did you like Raoul?" she asked.

Raoul bent forward.

"The most precocious ornament I've ever met. What does he do?"

"Nothing."

"Does it brilliantly. I mean—whence the *sestercie*?"

"He inherited an ink business."

"Ink?"

"Indeed. Ink. I've heard him talk about it. Raoul says he lacks business acumen. He says that he has a man named Hickel who is an ink genius. The inventor of Literary Blue, and Tyrian. Also gilt ink for fraudulent stock-certificates. Raoul drops in at the factory once a year, he told me. Cheers the men on. It's in Camden or Trenton or Perth Amboy, or some place. 'McLiesh's Inks.' You've heard of them. Hickel, apparently, runs the organization— whoever Hickel is."

Raoul nodded in approbation. Accurate, he thought.

Herbert took a cigar from a case in his breast pocket. He lighted it. "Don't let the smoke collect under your hat," he warned. "Might suffocate you. Sure. I think you're Raoul is elegant. Did you try to marry him while you were in Arizona?"

"Violently."

"No luck?"

"Not enough."

"Ah? I think he was annoyed last night by his successor."

Marcia shook her head. "You're wrong. He was annoyed by Vicky. She's one of those if-at-first-you-don't-succeed-try-try-again girls. Honor is the best policy. Do it now. Little-by-little. That's what broke up the marriage. Vicky lives for rules. Raoul exists to break them. Just the same, he does more good, in his offhand way, than any ten people do by organized charity."

Raoul gazed piously toward space.

"So," said Herbert.

"He finds his wife growing suburban: New Jersey clothes, Long Island voice, Westchester make-up, Connecticut dialogue. It pains him."

"Vicky's not really like that."

Marcia was amused. "Isn't she? I couldn't tell. You've probed depths I've missed."

"She's a woman."

"And it has never occurred to you that women are people?"

"Never. What do you bet that in the next week or two there is trouble in that trio?"

"Five thousand dollars of the money Father stole and will be to me, against five thousand you earned, that there's no trouble at all. Raoul's too darned casual to be involved in any trouble; or anything that's emotional, even."

They were passing more shop-windows. In one of them was a display of rugs. The center ornament, a decoration loyal to Florida and one guaranteed to catch the eye, was a huge alligator, stuffed, open-mouthed, and supplied, for a tongue, with a spray of electric-light bulbs. Raoul abruptly turned the perambulator so that his passengers were face to face with the beast. He bent over, and beckoned.

"Sic 'em!" he said. He walked away.

"WHAT is this?" Raoul asked of the MacTavish. On his bed were new garments—and gadgets: a canvas coat, canvas trousers, a hat with a green isinglass brim, a polo belt; a compass, a sheath knife, field glasses; shoes with thick soles, a steel roller tape measure, water-wings, smoked glasses, sun-tan unguent, iodine; a revolver.

"Fishing gear, sir."

"I see. What did you think we were going out for, the MacTavish? Pathé News?"

"They're all on approval, sir. All recommended."

"What's the tape-measure for?"

"To record the length of the fish, sir."

"And the water-wings?"

"In case you go overboard, sir. You inflate them. However—"

"However, what?"

"It is better not to go overboard in the Gulf Stream, sir."

Raoul picked up the compass and found north. "Really?"

"Sharks—barracuda. And if one person falls over, under no circumstances must another go after him."

"No?"

"No sir. It foolishly doubles the jeopardy. You see, if there are sharks, they merely devour two persons instead of one."

Raoul nodded. "Merely. Quite so. You know, Mac, all I usually wear is any old shirt and some white duck pants. I seldom fall overboard. I don't believe—" He studied the material on the bed. "Can all that stuff be pinned and hung about my person?"

"Readily, sir."

"And I'd look like a one-man expedition? A burglar just leaving a sporting-goods emporium?"

"You would be ready for all contingencies."

"Very well. In the morning you will accouter me. It will be a surprise to the Hendons. I understand that Bob is a dyed-in-the-wool deep-sea angler. He will be relieved when I appear, and he perceives that I am no greenhorn. And heaven help Moby Dick, if he blows in our vicinity."

"That is the spirit, sir."

Raoul squinted at his newly acquired valet. "The Mac-Tavish," he said slowly, "you are becoming half of my life."

"I owe any success I have had," the pale young man replied, looking at his master with one eye and out the window with the other, "to study and perseverance."

It was rough. Not stormy, but a boisterous breeze had piled up ten-foot waves in the Gulf Stream. Vicky and Raoul occupied side chairs in the stern cockpit of the *Beachcomber*. Their baits, hoisted by the outriggers, skipped through the water like flying fish. Bob sat between them, trolling a feather lure. The mate steered. The captain stood behind the three anglers, watching the baits. Miami was a pinkish palace on the horizon. Other boats bobbed and vanished—all but the Y arms of their outriggers—not far away on the same indigo water.

Vicky was thinking: Raoul still irritated her, just as much as he had when they had been married. You could tell him a million times that it was wrong and sinful and stupid to throw away his years in the way he did—but it never made the slightest impression. The idea that life was all fun was to Vicky so patently erroneous that she could not endure it even in another.

She looked at him: There he was, chattering with Bob, his rod negligently across his knees. He didn't even *fish* properly—didn't watch his bait. If a sailfish struck, he'd probably lose it because of inattention.

"Yeah," Raoul was saying, "I recall old Bemis. The son of a gun won the golf championship away from me. I had a trick putter, with a rubber shaft—and my caddy handed it to me on the last hole." He giggled.

"Bemis is President of A.A. and L. now."

"Really? He was a plodder, I remember."

Bob nodded. "Yep. One of the best. Worth a couple of millions today. And made it in the depression."

Even Bob, Vicky thought, resented Raoul's attitude.

Her husband drew an immense breath and bellowed it out. "Oh, boy! This is the life! Sun—water—a couple of pals—"

Raoul nodded. It was the life.

Vicky was yanked out of her seat. She hadn't been watching her bait. But it wasn't a sailfish.

Raoul saw what had happened, and winked at her.

Bob whooped. She was half-standing, half sitting, her rod bowed, her reel heating up, as line was torn away against a thirty-pound drag.

The captain threw the engines out of gear. Bob yelled, "Ride 'em!" and reeled in. Vicky, after a struggle, managed to thrust the butt of her rod in the leather seat on the edge of her chair. She held on with both hands. The fish ran for more than a hundred yards. Then it turned and came toward the cruiser. She reeled frantically, to keep the line tight.

Raoul turned toward the captain. "Tuna?"

"Looks like it. Big fish, anyway."

It sounded like. In a minute her line pointed straight down from the tip of her bent rod. The captain put one motor in gear and moved the boat forward. The fish swam along behind it—deep, and pulling hard.

"Hang on!" Bob yelled.

She gasped: "I am hanging on! What do you think?"

"Want any help?"

She stuck out her tongue at him.

The captain, ordinarily taciturn, seemed silently elated now, and vigilant—as if he were even more excited than his customers.

Vicky began to pump. She heaved up the tip of her rod and lowered it quickly, reeling up the line thus won. It was hard work. But she felt glad. She needed something tangible to pit herself against—she needed work, contest, an antagonist that was real.

Again the motors were disengaged. The *Beachcomber* turned into the trough of the sea and rocked furiously. Bob reached out and steadied his wife. She gained yard after yard of line. Raoul bent over the stern of the boat. Far below in the violet water he could see, by following the line with his eye, a dark body that flashed silver. A big fish, boring down against the upward pull.

He grabbed Bob's arm. "Look. She's getting him up!"

Bob looked. "That's grand. Exciting, huh? Half the fun of fishing in the Gulf Stream is being able to see so much."

Raoul interrupted him. He yelled: "Hey!"

They strained their eyes. In the depths beside Vicky's fish a larger body moved. It circled the tuna—if indeed it was a tuna; and Raoul yelled: "There's a shark looking him over down there!"

The captain rushed to Vicky's side. "Hurry!" he said. His face was taut and angry. Sharks were old enemies.

The fish came closer and closer to the surface. Raoul and Bob stared fascinatedly. They could see it clearly now. A tuna—a fifty- or sixty-pound one. And then—a streak like a torpedo, and a white flash of belly. Vicki's reel screamed again.

The captain stamped the deck. "Damn!" he said. "Damn!" He looked as if he wanted to cry. "Hold on," he said; then turning back to Vicky: "Maybe you can hook the shark."

"But I don't want to fight a shark. I'm shot. Look! My line's half gone!" Her voice was loud and strained. "Go on," Bob yelled. "We'll spell you."

SUDDENLY her rod relaxed. She began to reel in without much difficulty. The two men sat down. The captain went bitterly to the stern. The *Beachcomber* heaved uneasily. Vicki's tuna had been bitten in two, and she was retrieving the head.

Before she had it aboard, however, the captain suddenly snapped off her drag. "He's after what's left!"

And he was. They saw the tuna's head, and a yellow-brown dorsal moving behind it like a periscope. The shark hit and missed. The captain yelled: "Reel him up! We'll—" He jumped to the companionway. Vicky reeled again. The captain reappeared with a rifle. "Where is he?"

Everyone was searching the tumultuous water. The mate slid through a cabin window and clung to the top deck, steering with his foot and scanning the water from that vantage point. "There!" he bawled suddenly. "Coming up!"

The captain fired.

A great tail lashed into the air. The rifle cracked again and again.

"Great Lord," Raoul yelled.

The shark was thrashing in reddened water. And around him other dorsal fins suddenly appeared.

Then the mate, standing on a ledge on one foot, steering with the other, and clinging perilously to a cleat, lost his hold. He fell in.

They all saw him as he floated astern. He came up and yelled horribly. Much happened in three seconds. The mate swam badly. A shark broke beside him. He yelled again. Raoul stood, and began to pull off the canvas coat the MacTavish had bought for him. The captain shouted at the top of his lungs: "Don't do it! Don't go in! He can swim! You fool!" But Raoul had dived. The captain leaped to the wheel, threw the engines in gear, and jammed the rudder over. Bob grabbed a life-preserver and threw it toward the mate—across a widening gap of water. Then he pulled open the box in the stern of the *Beachcomber* and hauled out a coil of rope. And Vicky screamed.

"The idiot!" The captain was almost weeping with rage.

"Now we'll lose both of them!"

The *Beachcomber* turned.

Vicky was locked in her chair.

Bob crouched, ready to throw the rope. They made a circle, and for a sickening minute, no one could see either of the men in the water. Then, straining his eyes forward, Bob sighted the mate. The captain saw him at the same time, and cut down the speed. The *Beachcomber* slid forward. Bob threw. With a half-dozen desperate strokes the mate caught the rope. Bob and the captain hauled him up, dragged him forward to keep him clear of the propellers, and threw him into the boat. Then they looked for Raoul. The mate, quivering, shuddering, nevertheless climbed back on the top deck. The *Beachcomber* circled slowly in the heavy seas. A minute passed—two, five. Then their sickened hearts were set beating.

"On the port bow!" the mate shouted. They approached Raoul. He was floating high in the sea—on a pair of water-wings into which he was blowing vigorously. Bob threw the rope and missed by too great a margin. The cruiser circled. Vicky saw a shark's fin slowly slide past Raoul. And Raoul saw it too. He waved at it.

He caught Bob's next throw. . . . They stood—all together—in the stern: two men dripping, two men sweaty, Vicky ghost-white. Nobody said anything for a moment.

Raoul dried his hands on his coat. He took a package of cigarettes from it. "Lucky thing," he said, "that Mac-Tavish put those water-wings in my pocket. Saved a lot of swimming."

That precipitated a storm. Vicky stepped in front of him. Her voice was maniacal. "You fool! You know it's useless to go after anyone! You saw him swim. Why did you do it?"

"He wasn't much of a swimmer—" Raoul murmured. They looked bitterly at him. "It was a damn' reckless thing—"

Then the captain spoke tensely. "I don't know you very well, Mr. McLiesh. I haven't any right to criticize what you do. I've never lost anybody from my boat. My mate's a kid—and careless. You're grown. I never knew a grown man to do a more stupid thing in my life. Nobody will ever know why those sharks didn't hit you. I've seen a couple of men—" He walked away, unable to express his feelings.

The mate, a freckle-faced youngster of seventeen, looked at Raoul sheepishly and winked.

Raoul said to Bob: "Sorry, old man." "I can't bear it!" Vicky was still beside herself.

The captain saw that the emotional aftermath of the near-horror might easily exceed the thing itself. He gave orders. "Pete! Take the wheel. Come on, Mrs. Hendon! We're going to fish again! Forget it! There are some people who—just jump into the water when another person falls in. They can't help it. It's crazy, but— Sit down!"

"Do you think I can fish, now?" She stared from face to face.

Bob was pale and trembling. The captain was stern. Raoul was smoking, and his eyes were bleak and full of mockery.

She sat. "All right. I need a new bait." "That's the stuff!" the captain whispered.

He knew people. He found an opportunity during the day to say privately to Bob: "That was nice, cool work, Mr. Hendon." To Pete, the mate, he said: "You're through. Fired!" And to Raoul: "I didn't mean to bawl you out so. If you had a quarter as much brains you have guts—"

And he hired back his mate, on probation, as they came in that evening.

Chapter Three



ICKY was in a chair in a beauty parlor. Marcia sat at a table in front of her, having her nails painted carmine. Vicky had been talking steadily—through towels and steam and lotions and the glittering cloud of her own hair.

"And that was that," she said emphatically. "He began to fish again, just as cool as a cucumber. I sat there—still wanting to scream. Bob was nervous as a cat. Still is."

"You could do something with that," Marcia suggested. "The cat and the cucumber."

"Apparently you think it was funny too!" "Funny? No. I gather that Pete somebody and our beloved Raoul were nearly devoured before your very eyes. It would have been unpleasant—"

"Unpl!—You weren't there! You can't imagine. He fished! Bob couldn't, till he'd had half a dozen drinks. And Raoul wouldn't take one. That's the strangest part. Wouldn't touch a drink till evening! Pretty soon he hooked a big sailfish, and when it began to leap all over the ocean, he was as tickled as a kid! Imagine it! You'd think he'd have a better sense of proportion!"

MARCIA changed hands for the manicurist. "I can see it all! The boy goes over. Your efficient Robert bores methodically in to the rescue with life-preservers and ropes. Our adored Raoul has only one idea: to get on the firing line—the gnawing line—in person. A bad idea, but sincere." She waved her painted hand to dry it. "And you say he was blowing up water-wings when you came back to the scene? Where'd he get 'em?"

"Oh—he was carrying them for a gag. That preposterous valet of his got them for him, he said."

"Pretty good gag," Marcia whispered to herself. "Is his valet preposterous?"

"A ninny—cross-eyed. Raoul carries him around for a laugh. He picked him up on the street here—a jobless kid." "I haven't seen him."

"You will. Raoul loves to show him off. He uses tremendous words, and stands like a ramrod, and his voice is like a snail's."

"Snail-voiced?"

"Timid—and kind of patient. Oh—Raoul is always supporting some no-account. The last straw—I remember it only too well—was when I found out he hired eight guides by the year for his father's lodge in Canada; and Raoul hadn't hunted there since 1929."

"Eight?" "Eight! And do you know what he said when I came to him practically begging him not to be so extravagant?" "One couldn't guess."

"He said—suppose when he happened to want to hunt, there was an influenza epidemic, and typhoid, and one of the men was expecting to become a father, and one had broken his leg? He said that he needed eight as insurance for having one available. That—was the week I left him. He told me that on a Monday."

"Don't you suppose," Marcia suggested, "that it was really charity? That there aren't many jobs wherever his shooting-place is? So Raoul—"

"Perhaps. But is that sensible charity?"

"What is—sensible charity?"

"Bob's—ours. When we were married, we decided to give ten per cent of everything to charity. We have it all budgeted out: so much for hospitals, so much for the church, so much for Missions. We aren't religious—really; but we believe in the church as a social factor—"

"How much did Raoul give away when you and he were married?"

Vicky was vague—and annoyed. "How much? Too much! He'd give his shirt. Once we were actually flat for a whole month because he'd run into a man he went to college with. He told me some sort of hocus-pocus about the man not being able to get relief, and about how he intended to pay it back—oh, Raoul gave. But insanely. We never knew where we stood. And that's worse than giving nothing. You should have your own house in order first, you know."

"Raoul's careless," Marcia said—agreeing, almost, with Vicky. She seemed to wish her manicure finished.

"Careless! You know—he's going to stay a month, now. Just decided it. And I have half a mind to take him in hand again. I said so to Bob. Now that we're not married, I might be able to make him see my point."

"You're sure," Marcia said slowly, "that—it's all over between you and Raoul?"

"What do you mean?"

"You seem to relish 'taking him in hand.' I wouldn't, if he still makes you feel—how shall we put it—"

"What rot!"

"And I wouldn't do it—for revenge. No sense getting pyrotechnical just because he survived your departure intact."

Vicky laughed. "Marcia, I'm surprised at you. You don't know me at all."

"No? Well—the powder, paint, cream, soap, perfume, dye and bleach are all aboard the little woman. I'm slipping the moorings, as you nautical people say. Tell Bob to ring me up if he gets lonesome while you try again to strike out Raoul. My husband is broad-minded and also absent-minded. A rare combination. And I like you Bob, in a plain way. I like the distance between his hat and his shoes. So long."

Vicky laughed again. "So long, Marcia!"

BOB said to Raoul: "Vicky still wants to mend your character."

Raoul dabbled his feet in the water of a sparkling pool. "Does she?"

"Don't let it get you down. If she makes a nuisance of herself, tell me."

Raoul grinned. "You know, Bob, you're quite a guy: I like you."

Bob's eyes were clear and smiling. "Me too. Funny, though. If I'd seen you when I first met Vicky, I'd have socked you."

Raoul laughed.

"Not that she gave me cause. But she was so depressed. Miserable! I guess if it hadn't been for her mother, she'd never have come around. And I was jealous of you—your background. Besides having to face the fact that she hardly noticed whether I was there or not, I kept thinking that she'd left a—"

"Better man?" Raoul regretted saying that. It was a phrase which, under the circumstances, might easily have been misunderstood.

But Bob gave it no unintended application. "Sure: Name, dough, social position. I came from nowhere, you know—worked up. Easy to feel inferior. I wanted Vicky. She was everything I wasn't. Her mother understood. Mrs. Hadley is a pretty fine woman. She virtually pulled Vicky together by main force. . . . This is a devil of a thing to be saying to you!"

They laughed together in the sun.

"But," Bob continued facetiously, "there's no precedent for our situation, anyway. I told Vicky you and I would play girls about her. Made her sore. You understand."

"Sure."

"And—there's another thing. . . . About you jumping overboard the other day."

"Oh—that! My idiot nature."

"I know. What I want to say is—I wouldn't have had the nerve. Not that—well—" He seemed embarrassed. "Swim?"

"Sure. It's great down here, isn't it? Can you believe it's January?"

Men, Raoul thought, have a bad time expressing any feeling to each other excepting mirth or rage or disdain. And even laughter is usually destructive. . . .

The Grosses' limousine turned into their own residence, through a dead white arch. They stepped out and opened a gate and stood in a patio garden. An extensive walled place, bathed in amber radiance, with formal walks and sharp-cut grass plots, heavy white garden furniture, a central dance-floor which was a mosaic of the Zodiac—all backed up by the elaborate mansion hung in bougainvillea, trumpet flowers and jasmine.

"This is by far the worst of them all," Herbie said. "By far," she answered. "The spirit of Miami Beach! But at least it's a change from our native Weldridge, Connecticut."

He began to chuckle. He sat down on a bench molded of cement in the shape of the laps of three women—presumably Graces. "People should never try to create a heaven on earth. It shows their limitations. Paradise, Valhalla, Miami—all just top-spin for eating and drinking and loving and playing games." He patted the shoulder of the cement lady on whose lap he sat. He laughed harder. "Oh, Lord!"

Marcia began to laugh. She walked over to the fountain—a marble boy pouring water on a marble duck and filling a marble basin. She bent over the basin and took a drink of water.

"Madness!" she murmured, water dripping from her lips. Herbie whooped. He pushed a button. He held up his hand. Radio music began to play. He shook his head and pushed another button—three times. He rocked with laughter. Presently his butler appeared with two glasses of whisky and soda.

Marcia sat down beside him. They stopped laughing at themselves.

"Raoul and I called on the Seminole Indians today," she said.

"Interesting?"

"Made me sick. Smell and dirt and snakes and reptiles. Look. I was ready to bet that Raoul's being here wouldn't upset the Hendon ménage. I still am. But I did all I could to lose my own bet."

"What, for example?"

"I set Vicky after Raoul—which she was on the way to do anyhow. And I tried to start Raoul after Vicky."

"Why?"

"Why? Because it'll do them all good. Bob too. They need a mess in their lives. Too orderly."

Herbie was unemotional. "Doggone," he said. "Women are devils! Why didn't you let them alone? Are you trying to justify your own ill-spent life? Jealous of Raoul? Or Vicky? Or do you girls sprinkle poison around just for fun?"

"I believe you're serious!"

"Sure."

Marcia sprang from the bench. She threw her highball glass across the lawn, and it smashed musically on the wall. "You make me sick! Do you have to sit around and deliberately pull apart everything everyone does?"

"Mmm. I'm a man. Do everything deliberately. Characteristic—"

She tried to slap him. He caught her hand and gently pulled her down on his lap. She struggled and shivered.

"When you're around and furious, my dear," he said, "you look terrible."

He pulled his face down against her lips. "I love you."

He took off her slipper. He held it in his fingers and looked at it fondly. She sat her stockinged foot on his knee. He tossed the slipper carefully. It splashed into the basin of the fountain. Punishment for the shattered highball glass.

They kissed again.

Chapter Four



ICKY lifted her side-car. Her eyes sparkled.

"Here's to us!"

"To us!" Bob said. He caught her hand under the table. "Happy?"

"Ecstatic!"

They drank. "You never looked better."

She laughed at her husband. "I know it."

They were alone at a table set for seven. They'd driven up to Dumadan, Florida, early, and on purpose—over the palmetto-garnished dunes, beneath the oriflame of sunset, along the sea. All the way from Miami Beach.

"Waiter!" she called through the enormous dining-room.

"Yes, madame?"

"Can you put the flowers in lower bowls?"

"Certainly, madame!"

A few people were already beginning supper. They talked softly here and there in the arena of white napery and silver and flowers. The dance-floor was partly in the dining-room and partly out under the sky.

From their quiet table they could see freighters moving up in the Gulf Stream. They looked like toys. Their smoke-plumes disappeared against the leaden dusk of distance.

"It's a gorgeous place," Vicky said.

"And an incredible night. Shall we have another cocktail?"

She frowned and then nodded. "All right. We'll be reckless."

Lemon, cointreau, brandy. Nepenthe is made of such ingredients. They sipped. The orchestra began to file irregularly onto its platform. Presently there were muted notes, runs, *pizzicato* violin-tunings. "Romantic," Bob said. "You can understand all the movie stuff down here. Who could help going to pieces, in time, against these Florida backdrops?"

Vicky clinked her glass against his. "Glamour, you call it."

"Mmm. But you've got to take it in small doses—like liquor. A little makes you fresher and stronger when you go back to the work-a-day world. Too much—and you stay on the beach."

"That's what Raoul is—isn't it? A permanent beach-comber? He beachcombs in New York and Bar Harbor and Paris—"

Bob laughed easily. "You lay off Raoul. He's my friend."

"Let's take a walk. The others won't be here for a while."

"All right."

They went down to the sand. Along it were striped tents pitched on a boardwalk. In them were chairs and tables and bath-mattresses. By day these were bathing cabanas; by night—pavilions for whispering. They sat down in one and listened to the sea. The last magenta-dipped cloud faded before their eyes. They held hands.

Bob shook his head. "It gets you. You lose that feeling of responsibility. But how you do feel, compensates."

"How's that?"

"Languid—unmoral. Like—making no guarantees."

"It's lovely."

"Dangerous," he answered.

A WOMAN'S voice broke in on their beatitude: "So there you are!" She was a tall, ruthless-looking brunette. Behind her was her husband—taller still, fat, ingenuous.

"Hello, Paula!" Vicky said.

Bob shook hands with the man. "Andy! Just in time! We wanted an alibi for another sidecar. We're getting tight."

"We're perfect alibis," Paula Anderson said. "Isn't it beautiful!"

They sat down. Andy rang a little bell for the waiter. It tinkled in the twilight. "That's all you do down here—flatter the weather. And the scenery."

"All you can do," Bob said.

The waiter stepped around the tent and took their order. In the dining-room music swept rapturously toward the water.

Paula twisted in her beach-chair to face Vicky. "Is it true that your first husband is coming tonight?"

Vicky nodded with a feeling of superiority which her smile shared with Bob.

"In person," Bob said. "We're going to fight a duel on the beach at midnight. With honey-buns."

"What's he like?" Paula had turned, as quickly, to face Bob.

"Ask Vicky. She ought to be able to give a fairly accurate description."

"You'll see," Vicky said. The cocktails made her feel wicked. And Paula was so patently aghast, so plainly envious. She evidently felt that even if a woman had a right to two husbands, she was not entitled to parade them simultaneously.

Bob was chuckling. "He's tall and dashing. Looks like a movie actor, talks like a lunatic. You'll have to watch Paula like a hawk, Andy."

The cocktails came. . . . It grew dark.

When they went inside, the rose lights in the dining-room were burning, and hundreds of people had arrived. The moment of pause, of respite before adventure, which Vicky and Bob had experienced, was lost now in a babble of voices.

The Grosses were approaching on the dance-floor. Marcia was magnificent: her full body was clothed in sleek blackness; she was like a Stygian statue, an ebony carving; her bare arms and head and shoulders—part of the same mold—seemed nevertheless suspended above it.

Paula called through the greetings: "Darling, you're terrific!"

Marcia said: "I'm trying to make up for Herbie."

"But he's terrific too. Don't you know that? Herbie always looks like—"

"A buzzard!"

"—a Borgia."

Vicky felt the pale blue of her evening dress fade. Beside Paula's crimson and Marcia's absolutes of black and white, she was less a woman and more like a girl. She did not want to seem girlish. People like the Andersons, neighbors from their home in Cliffmont, would be watching her tonight. And in the sophisticated business of dining and dancing with her husband and her former husband, she needed to look wise and controlled. Needed to look like Marcia. To think that her dress handicapped her, gave Vicky a moment of panic. It was the sort of

dress Bob liked. He had, indeed, expressed violent pleasure in it.

Vicky was not honest with herself. She did not especially care, in her deepest self, what the Andersons thought. But she did want Raoul to get a certain impression: an impression of her worldliness and contentment and poise. She wanted Raoul to see that she had achieved not only the sense of security which he had never given to her, but the *savoir faire* which he so constantly admired. Alice blue was the wrong color for that. She had put it on, thinking of Bob. She wore it now, thinking of Raoul.

"Where is he?" Paula asked.

Vicky's response calmed another of her minute distresses—or rather, overrode it. "Late. Raoul has never been on time."

Bob clapped his hands for the waiter. "Another round," he said. "Excepting Mrs. Hendon and myself. We're way ahead."

Vicky whispered, "Don't clap your hands! People will look! You're tight!"

His face clouded for an instant. "I'm sober as a judge."

"You're tipping over your water!"

"Anyhow, sweets, we don't hash family matters at a party. We do it at home. Remember?"

"I'm only trying to keep you dry!"

Andy looked at them. "What ho? Squabble brewing?"

Vicky shrugged. "We were discussing our remarkable collection of antique snuff-boxes."

Andy roared.

Marcia and Herbie made quick estimates. Then Herbie's expertly dramatic voice took charge of the attention of everyone and gave Marcia a chance to murmur unnoticed over the rim of her cocktail glass: "Didn't I tell you? Can't you feel it? You won't be able to talk down all the undercurrents if they get tighter."

IT was eight-fifteen. Even Bob was a bit uncomfortable. Vicky whispered: "Shan't we have the *hors d'œuvres*?"

"Darn the guy!"

She nodded to the waiter. "We'll go ahead, I think."

Then Vicky saw Raoul—across the dance-floor and beyond heads and waiters and palms, looking as serene as ever. Black and white, like Marcia: black trousers, white mess-jacket, black hair and eyes.

Her heart sank. Raoul was not alone. He was bringing a girl. Vicky stared.

Bob rose and saw the girl, and shouted a welcome that was doubly genuine: "You've got us all cockeyed by being late. God bless you!"

Vicky and Marcia were concentrating on the girl. Paula, naturally, was absorbed in Raoul—who, perceiving that it would be difficult to walk through the dancers, put his arm around his girl and danced her to the table.

Of course, she was beautiful. Of course, Vicky said acidly to herself. Lovely—young, fresh, charming. Her hair was platinum—the sort that alarms women into fearing it is natural: platinum, and curled around her head like a halo. She was little and shapely and pert. Her eyes were blue and large and radiant. She danced looking up at Raoul and swinging her head lightly and parting her lips. Asking to be kissed, asking to be liked, happy.

"This is Joy," Raoul said. His eye, beneath his arched brow, flicked toward Vicky.

Joy said: "How do you do, everybody!"

Vicky compressed her lips. It was a good thing that Bob was looking not at her, but at Joy. Otherwise he might have assumed that his wife was thinking unfaithfully. She wasn't. She was feeling only frustration and self-pity. Joy wore a silver-white dress that matched her hair. The only color in her ensemble, by accidental genius, was the adoring, delighted blue of her eyes.

Joy whispered: "Isn't it heavenly! I never hoped to be taken here!"

Andy rushed to the nearest table and apologetically confiscated a chair. Bob was waving for a waiter. "Another place!"

Raoul's eyes met Marcia's. They swapped the same expression. It was—principally—amused.

They seated Raoul between Marcia and Vicky, and Joy between Bob and Herbie. Vicky had planned to have one husband on each side. It had seemed to be entertaining—before Joy appeared.

"We came up here ninety miles an hour! Really! I looked at the speed-thing. I couldn't look at the road!"

Bob and Andy laughed and listened.

"Who is she?" Vicky whispered to Raoul.

"Just—a child of nature."

"What do you mean by that?"

"What do you mean—who is she? Her name's Joy. She's female, attractive, sincere and beautiful."

"I presume men would think of her as beautiful."

"Vicky!" His tone was mimicked admonition, and he wagged his finger.

"Where did you meet her?"

Raoul sighed. Marcia was listening in, interestedly. "Meet, Vicky? Ah, I have it! You're confused. You forget, darling, that I'm a pitiable figure—a grass widower. A poor man, but free. You mustn't look at me with those harsh lights in your orbs. Turn it on Bob, if you will—and I don't hesitate to call your attention to the fact that he is not concerned about how Joy and I scraped up an acquaintance."

"I merely wondered."

"That's better. The apologetic nuance. I picked up Joy on the corner of Biscayne Boulevard and Second Street. A pretty place, if you'll visualize it. She's the cigarette-girl in some night hell or other."

"Oh," Vicky said.

She didn't know what she thought. After all, what business of hers was it if Raoul did pick up girls? She tried to discover why the whole matter roused her so thoroughly. She decided it was because picking up a cigarette-girl, and arriving late, and not telling her that he was escorting anyone, were all typical of Raoul. Further evidences of those maddening facets of his character.

She watched. She expected, almost hoped, that Joy would embarrass the other guests. But Joy didn't: she was at once extraordinarily naïve and appallingly sophisticated. And either genuine, Vicky decided, or incredibly clever.

Joy was talking, and they all listened: "Why—I just hitch-hiked."

"All the way from Columbus?"

"Of course. I didn't have any money. I figured that a lot of people would be coming here to Miami, so I might get work. And I knew it would be warm—and that would help with clothes, and things. And I met a great many nice people—and some who weren't nice at all. Besides, I've been wild to see the tropics—palm trees, and everything—since I was a little girl. And I had a lot of fun."

"Did you find work?" Paula asked.

"Right away. First in a store. That was last December. I fell in love with a boy—sort of; and we were going to get married. He said he was a lawyer. But one day he didn't show up, and I heard that he'd gone back to Seattle, and that he had a wife there—and wasn't even a lawyer at all. He was a dentist."

Nobody laughed. An evanescent regret showed on her face. "You learn from things like that." She chuckled—so they did. "Then I got a job in a beauty-parlor. I made twenty-eight fifty a week, and I saved half of it. And one day a man came in with a woman, and while she was getting a henna rinse, he asked me if I'd go out with him. He had lovely manners and very nice clothes. I thought the henna-rinse woman was his aunt, or something, and I saw a good deal of him. We went to Havana together—"

Vicky looked anxiously at Bob. He didn't seem to be annoyed. He was leaning forward, as were the others, attentive, absorbed. Joy was a little bit hesitant—not because her history was unconventional, but because it was attracting so much attention. "To Havana. He told me to buy a silver-white dress—a plain one—and not wear any jewelry. But one day I asked the henna-rinse woman a question about him, and I called him by his first name—which was Al—and it was her husband! So she had me fired. Then I got the cigarette job."

MARCIA whispered to Raoul: "Is that straight?" He shrugged.

"Because if it is—you've got something."

"Then what happened?" Andy asked.

"Why—I worked, just the way I always do, when there is any work. I've worked almost ever since I can remember. There were eleven in my family—and Dad died when I was eight. So—we had to pitch in."

"Have you been to Havana with many men?" Paula asked.

Her question brought icy glances from Andy and Bob. Raoul frowned. But the blonde girl shook her head. "I haven't thought I was in love—much. Probably you believe I'm pretty terrible, but—" She began to flush. "You see, I try to think. I work, and save, and send money home, and I'd like to marry some ambitious fellow and settle down and have my own children. But most of the fellows I know have lost their ambition, or else they can't afford to marry yet. And I'm twenty-one now—and sometimes it's discouraging."

It wasn't a complaint: it was a statement of how things were. And she added a request for indulgence even to that. "You see, I read when I can—but I didn't get very far in school. And I've had a terrible lot of fun."

Marcia whispered: "Stop her, Raoul, will you? I'm going to bawl."

Paula said coolly: "I suppose you learned to fix your hair that way—in the beauty-shop?"

Joy laughed. It was very pleasant to hear her laugh. "That's the best joke in my life. The kids on my block used to go around yelling, 'Tow head, tow head!' at me, and I felt awful. I thought it was the meanest thing to have hair practically the color of white mice. And then they got calling it platinum—and women use bluing and everything to make their hair like it. Whoever laughs last! That's an instance of it, isn't it?"

Bob said: "Would you like to dance?"

Joy looked longingly at the plate of dinner which had just been set before her, and she smiled angelically. "I'd adore it!"

VICKY'S guests reacted variously to the opportunity to discuss Joy.

Paula said: "Pretty brazen, eh?"

Andy stared hotly at his wife. "She's cute!"

Marcia controlled her passionate desire to slap Paula, by turning to Vicky and asking impersonally: "What do you think of her?"

"Why—" Vicky glanced at Raoul. He was eating. "She has never had a chance. Doesn't know anything. She's very attractive."

Herbie cleared his throat. He spoke under some strain, but still with control. "Do you want to speak your piece, Marcia—or shall I?"

Marcia's eyes danced to her husband's face. "You have the floor."

"Well—all I can say is this: That kid works and sends money home. She wants an ambitious man for a husband. She didn't say *rich*. And she wants to have kids. Can any of the lazy, arrogant, kept women at this table say as much?"

Marcia's eyes were pained, but she made them signal a "Bravo!"

Vicky looked frightened. She thought Herbie had had too much to drink. Raoul went on eating. Paula threw her fork into her plate. "I don't know when I've been worse insulted," she said. "Never, I guess."

Herbie smiled at her, his bald head bowed gracefully, but his lips were drawn thin. "I beg your pardon, Paula. I must have been—"

"Well! I should think so!" She picked up her fork. "Order some wine," Raoul whispered to Vicky. He then addressed the others: "See here, everybody. I brought Joy. I wish you'd leave it at that." It was, for Raoul, a very curt, even dramatic, demand.

The waiter came. Vicky conferred with Raoul—and ordered.

Raoul glanced out on the floor. He hoped Vicky wouldn't see, but she did, presently. She touched his arm. "Look!"

"What?"

Joy and Bob danced in the throng. He held her tightly. She was smiling and talking. His face was blank and taut. He seemed to realize that he was leading his partner within the range of vision from his table, and he wove his way back into the *mélée*.

"You did see!" Vicky's voice was low. The waiter was pouring wine. "It's Bob. He's drunk."

"Not drunk, Vicky. That is—not unconsciously drunk. He's just—interested in Joy."

"Nonsense!" Vicky said the word emphatically. She almost did not doubt it. Bob wasn't that sort of person. He simply didn't do what was not being done. And cer-

tainly one doesn't hug a hot-cha girl before the eyes of one's wife.

Raoul took her hand. "You're right, Vicky. It's nonsense. I guess he is a shade on the ticked quarter. Shall I cut in?"

But she hesitated. "No," she said finally. "He'll be all right."

JOY came back. Bob held her chair. She didn't sit down immediately. She looked at the other women. "You know," she said shyly, "I was introduced so quickly that I don't know which one of you is his wife—or what his name is."

Bob pointed at Vicky. "The ball and chain—Mrs. Hendon."

"You're lucky," Joy said. "You're extremely lucky." She meant it to be a compliment. Three people knew it. The other three didn't.

Joy began to eat, hungrily, and it was sometime before she discovered her wineglass. "Red champagne!" she said incredulously. "There are so many things on the table, I didn't notice it. It's beautiful!"

"It's Burgundy," Herbie said quietly to Joy. "And you're right. It is beautiful."

Vicky was unable to keep track of what happened after that. Nothing much—and a great deal. People talked and told stories. They laughed. They drank the Burgundy, and a bottle of champagne and some brandy. She danced with Bob and with Andy. At least, that was her impression. The lights went on and off. A man came out and did imitations, and a sister team sang songs, and a man and woman in Spanish costumes did a tango. There was some other entertainment, but she could never recall what it was. The music grew louder and louder, and people came and went from the table, and she took several drinks. She thought that they had no effect upon her whatever, and she realized that all she could do was to sit in her place and smile when others did.

The drinks, in actual fact, were not responsible for her confusion. She'd seen Bob dancing with Joy. And she wasn't very much surprised when an eternity had passed, and she thought that it might be safe to suggest starting back to Miami Beach, and she discovered that Bob and Joy were dancing together again. She followed them with her eyes as they made their way down the room toward that part of the floor which was out under the cool stars, and she lost sight of them.

She didn't know what to do. She thought of appealing to Raoul, but at that precise moment, Herbie said, "How about a little flyer at the wheel, McLiesh?" and Raoul nodded.

"Want to come, Marcia?"

She shook her head at her husband.

The two men walked off the floor and up a red-carpeted flight of stairs. There were chromium handrails on the stairs, Vicky noticed—chromium with gilt newel-posts. Probably gilded with McLiesh's inks, she thought insanely, and she laughed.

"What's funny?" Marcia asked.

"Nothing." She had to appear sensible again. Bob was out there under the stars. Maybe by now out in one of those cabanas where they had sat before dinner. "I'm not jealous," Vicky kept whispering to herself. "I'm not. I'm just astonished—and bitterly humiliated."

Andy refused Herbie's suggestion of playing roulette and thus found himself in the pleasant position of having to entertain three unusually attractive women. It was the sort of thing for which he felt fitted. And he immediately set out with a will. Paula, of course, knew every anecdote; but the Grosses and the Hendons were important, so she made a good claque. Marcia thought he was a dope, but she went on listening, and watching Vicky. As for Vicky—although she threw back her head and laughed, although she nodded in suspense and shook her head in denial, she had no idea whatever of what Andy was saying.

Raoul and Herbie played roulette for an hour. They had a great deal of fun. As he bought his first stack of chips, Herbie said, "Gambling is a thing of which I disapprove utterly."

As he laid down his second hundred-dollar bill, Raoul proclaimed to Herbie: "The only person who has a right to gamble is one who can afford—socially and financially—to make a sucker of himself."

At his fourth hundred, Herbie said: "I don't even get a kick out of it."

Raoul won seven hundred and fifty dollars. "It is," he murmured, "the pastime of a fool. A waste of your life. Imagine what your habitual gambler will have to say in heaven to Saint Peter—or on Judgment Day, or whenever: 'I spent my last fifty-two years watching a pill roll around a wheel.'"

"Or else," Herbie suggested, "I moved back and forth across my country to observe running-matches between terrestrial quadrupeds called horses."

Once, Herbie was serious. "Do you play much?"

Raoul shook his head. "Once a year, maybe. I hate it. It bores me."

The older man looked at him. "That's what I thought. It fascinates only a special sort of nitwit." He laid his last fifty dollars on Twenty-one. It came up.

At the end of an hour, they were fed up. They'd lost all the money they had in their wallets. The management graciously offered to extend credit. They declined, and walked down the red-carpeted stairs, having been entertained by each other, feeling friendly, and leaving behind a roomful of intense people in evening clothes who could not afford—financially or spiritually—to do what they were doing.

Just before they reached the table, Bob walked up to it, alone. He looked soberer and a little bit apprehensive.

"Where's Joy?" Vicky asked dully.

"Joy? Isn't she here? I don't know. We were dancing—and she excused herself. I haven't seen her since. I felt stuffy, and went out and sat down alone by the sea. Sort of expected some of you might join me there."

At that minute Joy appeared. Everybody sat down. Vicky was white and unsteady. "Where have you been, Joy?"

"Oh—just looking around. Isn't this a gorgeous place?"

"Weren't you out—?"

Raoul cut in quickly. "As a matter of fact, Vicky, if it's imperative that you know, she was with me. I have a suite here."

Vicky was startled. She turned to Herbie. "I thought he was gambling—with you."

"He left," Herbie said.

There wasn't anything that Vicky could say. But a terrible weight had been lifted from her heart. Bob had been alone. One of his headaches, probably. But so great had been her accumulation of feeling, that it could not be dropped readily. And she found almost at once a channel in which it might have genuine and more endurable expression: Raoul had a suite. What a flagrant rotter he was!

"About time for the Grosses to be starting south," Herbie said.

That broke up the party. That is, it brought to an end that part of the evening which involved all the participants jointly. The party itself endured as a memory, a complex of attitudes, feelings, seeds.

Chapter Five



HEN the Hendons drove home, Vicky took Bob's arm and cried a little and confessed. "I thought—I'm ashamed of it—that you were out there with that terrible little girl!"

Bob patted her hand and replied: "I'm glad to see you can still be jealous—after two years."

At which they both laughed, with consummate relief. Paula was still succinct. "That Raoul McLiesh is impossible! Bringing a tramp! And Herbert Gross is no better, if you ask me."

Andy was sleepy. "Aw, I thought it was a peach of a party. Joy gave it novelty."

The Grosses were moody, and each one appreciated the humor of the other. They spoke in phrases that were cryptic because they were only fragments of their thoughts. And between their speeches, flowed miles of palmetto and sand and starshine.

"... came through like *Shirley Cartan*."

"Vicky was in a state—several states, at once."

"She'll be O.K."

"I wonder."

"Appealing child. Broke my heart—"

"What in hell is civilization coming to, when all that can happen to a kid with as much innate decency?"

"Those Andersons!"

Raoul and Joy, of course, did not go out in the late night to the parking-yard with the others. Raoul had said he had a suite. It was a lie. After the bill was paid, they remained at the table. Raoul didn't talk. Joy, as if intuitively feeling a wish for silence, was also silent. She looked at him and at the dining-room. She thought, still, that it was a beautiful place. She wondered if Raoul had a wife, like some of the others. But she blocked that speculation. Raoul was wonderful; Raoul was magnificent. He might care for her. But he wasn't the ambitious young man. He was a million miles—not above, but different from that imaginary youth of Joy's.

"Maybe you're tired," she said at last.

"I am tired," Raoul answered. "Fearfully tired."

She took his hand. "I know how it is to be tired like that. Look—if you want, I can rub your back. I'm pretty good at massage."

He lifted his face from his hands, and his eyes met Joy's, luminously, like eyes on the point of tears. "I'll bet you are, Joy!"

"And then—in the morning you'll feel all rested. And we can go swimming."

"I haven't any suite here, Joy. That was a lie. Vicky—she thought you'd been out with Bob, and I lied to cover it up."

"I know. But I still thought that—"

He stood up and said gruffly: "Come on! I'm going to take you home." And he led her across the floor with a gallant pride.

They drove for a long while without saying a word. When she was almost at home, she felt that some expression of appreciation would not burden his avowed fatigue too greatly. "I had a lovely time."

"I'm glad, Joy."

"And I like your friends. Though I guess I don't understand them very well."

"They don't understand you, Joy."

"Oh, I'm simple. But I guess Mr. Hendon didn't quite understand me. He tried all that time to make a pass at me. I guess when I said that I'd been going with married men, he didn't realize I didn't know either of those men was married."

Raoul said nothing.

"I don't see why a man with a wife as lovely as that Vicky would want to play around with a harum-scarum like me."

Raoul put on the brakes hard, and turned into the ditch. "Joy," he said quietly, "I'm not a married man, and I'm not making a pass at you. But will you kiss me?"

"Why—" She held up her face. He kissed her solemnly. "What was that for, then?"

"I just wanted to see what it was like," he answered strangely, "to kiss an honest woman."

She thought about that. He drove on. "You're funny," she said. "I imagine you're probably pretty swell."

"I'm a rat," Raoul answered.

VICKY woke in the morning with a bad hang-over. Her eyes burned; her brain throbbed; her mouth was dusty. She looked toward Bob's bed, where he lay on his back snoring; and she saw herself in a mirror. With that immemorial female comment, "I look terrible!"—unspoken, but expressed none the less,—she climbed painfully and silently from her bed. On the way to the bathroom, she had to stop and grab the dresser. She felt faint.

She took a drink of water. She thought that perhaps a bath would make her feel better, but she did not want to run the shower for fear it would wake Bob. Somehow the notion of facing Bob in her condition was unbearable. But because it was denied to her, a bath became the most desirable thing she could imagine, and the sunshine piercing the blinds suggested the swimming-pool—if she could make it.

She dressed tremblingly, sickly.

She went out in the hall and rang for an elevator. She waited forever before a subterranean bump and shunt announced that the car had started up to her.

On the boardwalk she began to feel a little better—weak, but less agonized. A hang-over is an unpredictable toxemia. The individual suffering from one may experience a single protracted phase, pain or anesthesia, or an

alternation of phases. It is generally accompanied by great debility, rarely by a frenetic desire for action. Alcohol acts most forcefully upon the nervous system, and a poisoned set of nerves produces symptoms which depend upon their state when the poison was originally swallowed.

Vicky made her way dolefully to her cabaña and undressed. Little things smote her consciousness without making much of a record there—a party of sleepy people in old clothes drinking coffee in the bar preparatory to a day's fishing; a negro with a banjo walking to work, singing; the cool smell of the washed cement walk.

She could hardly see when she stepped from the cabaña out onto the swimming-pool deck. The light made her stagger. She dove into the water. There was a brief, stabbing pain in her head. Then she improved a little more, and lay on her back, swimming idly.

She could see the deck steward putting up orange and green umbrellas on metal tables, and setting out medicine balls and shuffle-board tools—trotting wherever he went, busy, whistling. Like morning in a René Clair movie.

BY and by, refreshed, she spread a pneumatic mattress in the sun and lay down. She felt weak and drowsy again, and almost slept, but not quite—because her mind continued to move from event to event and person to person with the pinpoint perspicuity of a pen on an automatically recording graph:

Bob was all right. He hadn't meant to humiliate her. He'd really behaved very well. He had probably danced with Joy because he was the host, and he felt sorry for her. It was Raoul who was responsible for her perturbation—Raoul who had made her suspect her husband of not playing cricket. Because you could never trust Raoul. And having had that old distrust reawakened by Raoul's appearance in Miami, she had, not unnaturally, applied it to Bob.

She felt for a while that it was wrong not to be enjoying her vacation more—even the hang-over.

But she and Bob were sensible, rational people. When pleasure became indulgence, their instincts rebelled. She fled for a while to remembering the orderliness of her house in New Jersey.

It would be snowy there now—a clean white snow would make turbans on all the barberry bushes, from the porch to the walk. It would lie on the slate roof and in the cement that held the dark red bricks together. Automobile chains would beat mudguards cheerily as cars ran down the street. Clocks would strike, and phones would ring. People would be sitting in breakfast-nooks eating grapefruit before the husbands went off to work in New York. They'd be looking at the snow.

Wives would wave to their husbands at the station from the warm interiors of their sedans. Trains would chug cotton-balls into the air. Then—people would plan bridge games for the evening. And night would come—crystalline and cold, fresh and bracing. Bob would boom in from the car and tell her about the leather-belt business. And perhaps during the night, after they had gone to sleep again, the snow would commence to fall anew, a healthful, invigorating descent of feathery flakes that would overdrap the landscape, that would be falling still when they sat together once more in the breakfast-nook.

It all seemed magical; and the Florida heat and sunshine became unwonted, abnormal, out of joint with the date. It was incorrect background which had led to such diseased hours as those she had endured on the previous night.

Bob and Joy! Ridiculous!

Then she knew it wasn't ridiculous. She knew it was true. She knew Bob had been sitting down there by the romantic sea with the platinum girl.

She could not have explained just why she knew. The focus of her mind was jiggled by a succession of instantaneous trifles, and it revealed the fact. Raoul, for one thing, wouldn't hire rooms here, just like any traveling salesman, and bring a girl to the party, and so on. It was infinitely too premeditated for Raoul. It was everything he would not dream of doing. He had lied. And Herbert had also lied when he said that Raoul had left the roulette-game. Raoul had been there all the time, Herbert had merely conspired with Raoul, in an instant, to strengthen an alibi that would save her face.

Vicky rearranged her thoughts. What did it all mean?

It meant, first, that Raoul and Herbie and probably Marcia knew perfectly well that Bob had been necking Joy. It meant, second, that Bob had lied to her. It meant, finally, that he really had humiliated her. The moment she saw through the quickly wrought tissue that the three men had made to deceive her, she found further confirmation for her insight: Bob had been much too content and self-assured about the whole matter on the way home, and afterward, when they were getting ready to go to bed.

She didn't notice that she had made her discovery not through Bob's actions, and a diagnosis of them, but through her knowledge of Raoul.

So. She didn't mind that Bob had lied to her. She didn't mind a blonde in Bob's life—in that impersonal, casual way. Her mother had been a double-standard woman, resigned to the infidelity of men and masochistically reveling in it, while fiercely determined to maintain the chastity of women. Vicky had been brought up with that creed. Then—with Raoul—it had been different. She had never known, really, what Raoul thought. But occasionally during their marriage he had acted as if he was not especially concerned about whether she remained true to him or not. That had always angered her. Afterward, as Bob's wife, she had gratefully reassured her original tenets: Bob was free to do as he pleased so long as he did not interfere with the sanctity of her reputation, so long as his lapses did not cost her any face; she would remain inviolate. And she did, and she did not worry about Bob. Or if occasionally she worried, she never let him or her mother or the world know anything about it. Sometimes, when he came back from business trips, she was pretty sure that Bob lied. But that was honorable. Men can't help themselves, her mother had always said. The wise wife encourages them to lie.

Vicky had thus encouraged her beloved.

Only, last night, Bob had committed a real sin: he had publicly embarrassed her. He had made her sit in sick helplessness for hours while he pursued a course which was permissible only if concealed.

That wasn't in the code. Too many things like that could spoil a marriage. She'd have to go over it with him thoroughly. She was glad that they had a system for such things. "Lay your cards on the table, and I'll lay mine," Bob said often. "If anything goes wrong, we'll work it out together."

Something had gone wrong.

Fortunately, they could fix it up. She'd be justified in being pretty vindictive, to drive home her point.

And then—she had a spasm of weakness and loss of courage. Her hang-over, perhaps. For she knew poignantly that this was a matter which would not arbitrate well. Bob wouldn't recognize it as a just cause. He'd stick to his lie, knowing that the other men would support him. "I'll hold court with you on you using my razor to shave your legs, darling. Or on me walking on the new floor in golf-shoes. But I won't hold a session over something I didn't do."

So she was miserable again.

RAOUL came down to swim, swinging a towel and singing softly: "*You press the first valve down—*"

She raised her head.

"Hello, darling! You look like flowers!"

"I'm awful!"

"I know it. Your eyes are bloodshot. Your make-up is imperfect. Your hair is tousled, your figure is celestial. You look angry and relaxed. You look susceptible of feeling. You look hungry and hurt and altogether ravishing." He sat beside her and sang some more. "*—and the music goes round and round—*"

"That song! They played it all last night."

"A stirring little thing. It'll be revived every ten years or so. Yes, indeed. Old men who are prep-school boys now will sit in rocking-chairs and cry in their beards when they hear it, remembering lovely girls from Sweet Briar who have long since moldered in their graves. Lovely day, isn't it?"

"Is it?"

He bent over her. His voice was less facetious. "Hmm. A bad one, eh? You've got out of training since you left me, Vicky. Had a swim?"

"Yes."

"Let's see. I wonder—" He hopped up and walked across the deck. He talked for a moment with the stew-

ard and waited while he made a phone call. Then he came back. "It's all arranged."

"What's arranged?"

"Your cure. A girl can't lie around feeling the way you do. Now you go downstairs to the hydrotherapy place, and you ask for Dr. Walker. Dr. Walker is a lady. She will shut you in a cabinet full of electric lights. She will wrap you in steaming blankets. She will shoot icy water on you. She will see that you are given a massage. That will take about an hour. And you come back here." He sang the last phrase.

Vicky shook her head.

He took her hand and turned her over. She limply permitted it. He lifted her to her feet. She felt dizzy and ill. She rested her head on his shoulder. He tipped it back and they gazed at each other. Raoul's face was fond and uncomplicated by his usual cynicism. She did look helpless and unhappy and lovely, and for a minute he wondered what she would do if he kissed her; and Vicky, troubled and disheveled, thought he was going to, and hoped he would.

But he spanked her instead. "Hydrotherapy, honey! Then back here. You'll be a new woman. Dr. McLiesh will be waiting with further palliatives."

She walked away.

Raoul lay down on the mattress she had vacated. He closed his eyes and puckered his lips and whistled softly. In the air around him were the turbulences Vicky had left. He might very easily have been swirled by them into a collision of feelings and ideas. But he chose not to be.

Life was good. He thought about nothing at all, pretty nearly: His raccoon. . . . The absurd spectacle of the MacTavish taking his exercises. . . . He wondered if perhaps Hicckel could use the MacTavish. Kind of silly to keep such a youngster working as a valet.

He recalled Joy. Nice kid. World full of kids like that. Wonderful thing, women. He loved women.

IN an hour Vicky came back. She looked calmer now. Raoul was sprawled in a beach-chair surrounded by Sunday papers, his eyes fixed on the comic section.

He leaped up. "Ah-ha! Well! Your Bob hasn't showed yet. How is it? Any echoes of the grims? Any resurgent disapposons of the head-throb? Any nausea?"

"A touch of all—but just a touch. I'm going to live." She started toward the mattress.

"Oh, no. Not in the sun! Not at this point. The shade." Raoul waved as a surveyor does, and a distant waiter ducked his head in response. "Here." He had made ready another chair, with cushions, and a stool, fixed so that her feet would be in the sun and no more.

Vicky twiddled her toes and smiled at him. Her first smile of the day. "How did you know they'd be chilly?"

"I'm an old hang-over man. . . . Ah!"

The waiter had arrived with two glasses full of creamy amber fluid. He put them on a tabourette.

"Is that a drink? Because I couldn't touch anything!" Vicky shuddered.

"You could," he answered. "And you're going to."

"It would kill me!"

He didn't answer. He picked up one of the glasses and drank half of its contents in a couple of rapid swallows. He put it down. He tapped his lips with a napkin. He stretched. "Ahhhhh," he said, with a wide, un concealed yawn. "That's better! You can feel it hit your toes."

There was an interval. "What is it?" she asked finally.

"Whisky sour."

"It sounds awful."

"I know. One must be stern with oneself, though."

"Do you want mine?"

"Good heavens, no! Only one, Vicky. One. Never two. Not even for a hang-over that makes you get a coffin measurement taken. One!"

"Well—" she reached out. "It couldn't be worse." She drank. She choked. She sputtered—and finished the drink. Then she lay back and closed her eyes. Presently she spoke again, in a changed voice.

"You know—I think I do feel better."

"Of course you do!"

"Why are you being so nice to me this morning?"

"Oh, a fellow-passenger on this busy planet—in distress—"

She opened her eyes languidly. "You almost kissed me, when you picked me up—didn't you?"

He smiled a little. "Well—yes."

"Why?"

"Because I wanted to."

She shut her eyes again and said drowsily: "You allow to do everything you want to do, don't you?"

"As much as I can. You see, if you do what you want, and it turns out to be something nice, it's much holier than doing nice things you don't want to do at all."

"Is it? Then—why didn't you?"

"Why didn't I what?"

"Kiss me."

"Oh,"—he was off-hand—"I thought maybe you might slap me, and spoil it."

"I wouldn't have."

"I know it."

She rubbed her ear with her bare shoulder. "I remember—"

"Yeah. So do I. Want some Sunday paper?"

"No. I'm hungry."

"By George! So am I! Bacon and eggs, what? Coffee."

She sighed. "You order. And Raoul—"

"Yep?"

"If you ever do happen to want to kiss me again—"

"Yep?"

"Well—do it. Will you? After all, it wouldn't be—the first time." She nuzzled her pillow.

WE now come to an unrecorded incident in Florida history: an incident which depended upon a bottle of liniment.

After Vicky's hang-over had been cured and she had breakfasted, she felt better. She decided not to think any more about what she considered as "things." Bob was entitled to escape being scolded for his hour with Joy. After all, he probably assumed it was his vacation, and the rules were off.

She was at peace. Raoul was also pleased. He felt that he was managing very well. It was entertaining to see Vicky again, and as he had said to Marcia, illuminating. It strengthened his already deep determination not to marry any more.

The fact that he had almost kissed his former wife distressed him not at all. As Vicky had said, it would not have been the first time. And she was a good-looking woman. . . . All pleasant, he thought.

Bob appeared about eleven-thirty, shaved by a barber and superimposing scent upon the salt air.

He said: "Heigh-ho, everybody!"

Vicky beamed at him. "Bobby! How do you feel?"

He said, "Sweet!" made a dour face, and laughed. "I'm for a swim!"

"I'll go with you," Raoul said.

"Good! What I need is exercise!"

They dived into the pool together; and Raoul realized, as he swam, that Bob, by keeping out in front, was trying to race him. Raoul decided that he would not permit himself to be beaten. He was a good swimmer. In the end, without any challenge being offered or accepted, they swam four lengths and Bob won by several yards.

They sat together on the edge of the pool. Raoul grinned weakly and panted.

Bob pretended that they had not been racing. He banged Raoul's chest playfully with the back of his hand. "You're out of condition!"

"Yes. Guess so."

"Ought to take some sort of setting-up exercises. I do. Half-hour routine every day, summer or winter."

Raoul grinned. "I let my valet do it for me. The Mac-Tavish. He takes an hour—thirty minutes for himself, thirty for me."

"No kidding!"

Raoul nodded and panted.

Bob stood up on the diving-board. He marched out to the end and jumped a few times. Then he went to work. Raoul watched him. He was good. But Raoul knew he himself was better, though out of practise. When Bob had finished a front and back jack-knife and a one-and-a-half, Raoul walked up and did a back one-and-a-half. That put the leather-belt maker on his mettle. He did a double front somersault. Raoul was thinking back to his undergraduate days in an effort to recall exactly the take-off and tuck for a gainer one-and-a-half. He thought he had it. He ran and jumped. But he was so engrossed in trying to remember what to do when he was in the air,

that he missed his take-off, slipped, and turned his ankle. As a result he fell into the water with a tremendous splash, and when he came to the surface he was laughing, but his face was white.

He scrambled out and nursed his ankle.

"Hurt badly, old man?"

It did hurt badly. But either because pain is closely associated with rage, or because pain produces unjust rages, Raoul thought he detected pleasure in Bob's solicitude. "It'll be all right," he said.

"You gave it a dirty wrench."

Raoul nodded. Presently he tried walking on it. Not sprained, anyway. He could walk well enough, and the pain diminished. Nevertheless it bothered him for a couple of days. And it left him with a feeling that Bob had been glad to have an equal eliminated from the sport of diving. At least, every day thereafter, Bob performed his full repertory of dives several times, and the scores of ladies around the pool looked on with awe while their gentlemen companions regarded him with envy.

However, the strained ankle was responsible for the liniment, and the liniment for the unrecorded history.

On Monday afternoon they went to the races. Raoul, and the Hendons and the Grosses in the Grosses' limousine. On the way to the track Herbie had his chauffeur stop at a drug-store while he bought some cigars; and Raoul, remembering that he wanted liniment, had the curb service girl bring a small bottle to him. He put it in his coat pocket and dismissed it from his mind until he should have an opportunity to apply it to his still aching ankle.

It was a coolish gray day, and it had rained during the past night. The track was wet, and the crowd at the track wore, for the most part, topcoats and hats. In the parking-yard were regular avenues and rows of cars, most of them with out-of-State licenses—thousands of them; and though the weather was part of the inevitable sequence of cold days described always as "unusual," the spirit was gala.

A band played in the grandstand, and the throng set up in the sheltered outdoors that staggering murmur which precedes football games and prize-fights and horse-races. In the steel and concrete labyrinths under the stands were long rows of windows marked, "Five Dollar Straight," "Five Dollar Place," "Two Dollar Show," and so on. An amiable, stomach-vibrating voice announced from time to time over loud-speakers such details as the minutes-to-go before the next race, and the departure of the horses from the paddock. People with copies of *Racing Form* and red and green dope sheets strewed themselves across the lawns among the hibiscus and oleander. Hot dogs steamed aromatically in silver caldrons, and beer-mugs banged on long bars.

THE excitement of a few persons is contagious, but in a big crowd, excitement is epidemic. Vicky, walking between Raoul and Bob, took both their arms. They went through a turnstile and made their way up to a box on the clubhouse porch where they met the Andersons, who were devotees.

Mrs. Anderson immediately gave a few tips. "Happy Minstrel," she said, "in the next race. To win. Any way you look at it. By jockey or record. Hillie's up. Stookin and Talliver both picked him. And I've got Music Judge in the third, for a long shot. He came in for me once before at Belmont. What are you betting, Mr. Mc Liesh?"

Raoul glanced at the list. "Tiger Rummley."

She shook her head. "That's foolish. He's no mudder, and certainly not an outsider—"

Raoul looked wise. "Nevertheless, he's a great horse. A blunder—"

"Blunder?" she repeated, perplexed, and yet afraid to show lack of knowledge of racing terms.

"A blunder."

"I don't think I've ever heard of 'blunder.' Is it, by any chance, a British word?"

Marcia looked at Raoul, gauged the straightness of his face, and waited.

"Australian," Raoul said to the brunette.

"Oh! They do have some fine horses down under, don't they?"

"Some fine blunders," he said.

"But what is—a 'blunder'?"

"It's a horse," Raoul answered, "who sees he is dropping

behind the field and realizes that desperate measures must be taken. See?"

"Of course I do! Horses *love* to race! I'm positive they feel every bit as ashamed as the jockeys and owners, when they lose."

"Exactly. All right. Your true blunder, faced with the danger of losing, jumps over the fence, cuts across the track, and comes in way out in front. It's headwork. In Australia—"

Vicky and Herbie, Marcia and Andy shouted with laughter.

Paula slowly turned crimson. "I don't think that's very funny," she said. "Evidently you know nothing about racing."

"Very little."

Marcia leaned toward him. "You're even now."

He grinned fugitively. "That was for Joy."

"So I gathered. I don't like Paula either."

AMORALIST would have called Paula a destructive and malicious woman. A sociologist would have called her a victim of her environment. A layman would have called her an attractive female, if he were exposed to her normal self, and a hell-cat if given an exhibit of her raging temper. A shrewd layman might have diagnosed her as merely another discontented wife. Certainly she was a trouble-maker. And Andy was afraid of her, which was basically, no doubt, the cause of her behavior.

When Raoul kidded her, and Raoul and Marcia whispered together about her, (she felt sure it was about her), she suffered not the slightest mortification. That in proffering her racing tips, she had done so with an intolerable amount of the specialist's snobbery never occurred to her. She was a strong, ferocious woman forced to live with a flabby man in a docile suburb. She almost welcomed hostility.

Paula let the first race pass. Then she had a couple of drinks—strong drinks.

Horse-races are slow affairs. The actual running time occupies only a couple of minutes,—but between each two races there is a long and inexplicable wait. The crowd feeds itself, and makes wagers, and then makes other wagers to cover the first one, and sits, and waits.

It was during the interval that Paula opened her attack. She moved her seat in the box so that she would be next to Herbie, and so that Marcia could overhear. Marcia suspected what was coming, but no one else did.

"You know," Paula said, "the two people I've wanted most to meet are your wife and Raoul McLiesh?"

"Really?" Herbie said unencouragingly.

"Really and truly. Isn't it funny that I'd see them both in Miami?"

"The crossroads of the world, what?" Herbie was merely bored by her small talk. He sustained it because to do so was polite.

"Isn't it! And do you know why?"

He shook his head.

"Well, probably Marcia never mentioned it, but I spent a season at an Arizona ranch the year after your wife and Mr. McLiesh had been there. Not the same ranch, but a near-by one."

Herbie turned the full power of his cold dark eyes and his hawk-like profile upon her. "I see. Now, in the next race—"

Paula was not disturbed. "You never *heard* such gossip as those two left behind!"

"Maybe," Herbie murmured, "I'd better not."

"Oh, but you must! It's too delicious! We're all modern here, anyhow, aren't we? Of course we are! Or there wouldn't be one of us with two husbands."

By that time everyone was listening.

Andy said in a jittery voice: "Oh, Paula—let's go for a beer!"

She ignored him. "They were—that way. I understand that every day—they'd ride off in different directions—You know, that was some time before Vicky had divorced Raoul—"

Marcia turned around and said in the weariest of voices: "All right, Paula—we give you Round Two."

Paula stared at her. "Of course, I suppose what I'm saying doesn't have any *news* value—"

They sat through the second race, and the third. Paula drank. Before the fourth event, Raoul and Vicky and Bob went down to the lunch-counter and bar for a sandwich.

"Our Mrs. Anderson is having herself a fit," Raoul said as they drank coffee.

Bob nodded. "And getting drunk. But after all, you did ride her pretty hard."

Vicky glanced from one to the other. "Nevertheless, nobody is entitled to be so obvious."

"The friend of woman," Raoul said unctuously, "often has hard sledding."

Bob shrugged. "No use picking on a dame."

They went back. And after the last race, they started out with the river of people.

They had passed beyond the first gate in that crowd when some one waved at Raoul. It was Joy. She was walking along with another girl. He immediately excused himself and pushed through the intervening people, smiling warmly. "Hello, child!"

"Hello, Mr. McLiesh! What do you think? Elsie and I won eighteen bucks!"

"That's marvelous!"

"How did you do?"

"I guess I lost about fifty."

"Oh, my! That's dreadful!"

Raoul laughed.

"This is Elsie Robbins."

He shook hands courteously. "Look, Joy—I want to see you again soon."

"Why—I'd adore it! Any time! I can remember every minute of the other evening." Her incredible hair, tied in a ribbon, fell over her thin coat. Her eyes were direct and tender.

"I'll call you." He nodded to Elsie, and started back.

He had missed a *contretemps* furnished by Paula, who had been seething all afternoon. Her heart was stuffed with envy and malice, and her blood-stream was charged with alcohol. For the last half-hour at the race her behavior had caused her companions momentarily to expect some vulcanism. Joy provided the incentive.

"That girl," she said, "better keep out of sight of the Vice Squad."

Marcia held her temper. "Oh, she's all right. Sweet, as a matter of fact. And really decent. Big-hearted."

Argument was gasoline on Paula's fire. "She's a bum!" Marcia passed that one up.

Lack of reaction was the last straw for the brunette. She threw herself into hysterics. Her eyes became glazed, and her voice was a scream that cut through the crowd-noises and transfixed the people. "A bum! I'll tell you what she is! I'll tell everybody what she is! Joy's a tramp. A low-down—"

Marcia knew what was coming. This was neither a good place nor a safe time for a scene. And it was going to be a bad scene. There was only one possible escape from vast embarrassment and a small panic. Marcia took a chance on it. She gritted her teeth, and slapped Paula's face. It didn't work. Paula was raging, out of control, and very drunk. In a split second she had leaped on Marcia, knocked her to her knees, and clawed her face.

RAOUL and Herbie separated them quickly. Raoul tried to cover Paula's mouth. She bit him.

The tableau was brief. But a hundred people stopped to watch, and those who could not see pushed in for a view. Some one began to yell: "Fight! Fight! Catfight! Sock her, sister!" A good thousand of the men and women surrounding the nucleus did not know what was happening, but immediately wanted to know. They converged, the outsiders running. Andy came up, and Bob—both of them frightened.

Vicky called to Raoul: "Get them out! For heaven's sake! *There are reporters coming!*"

And there were, several grinning reporters and camera men, following a cop who was boring in, yelling: "Make way! Make way!"

"This is going to be dandy!" Herbie said.

Bob looked at the women and at the newspaper men, who had penetrated almost to his side. His face was sick. Then Raoul went into action. At his elbow was a right angle in the low fence around the parking-yard. He climbed up on it—and emerged head and shoulders above the clamorous mob. He cocked his hat over his eye. He smiled his most bland smile. He boomed: "Ladies and gentlemen!"

The cop stopped. The reporters stopped. The crowd turned toward him.

"Ladies and gentlemen!" he repeated in a stentorian voice. "Now that my two lady assistants have so completely drawn your collective attention, I want to address you on a subject dear to my heart, and one that is destined to become dear to yours! Osprey's Liniment!" With a grandiloquent flourish, he drew the bottle of liniment from his pocket. He began pouring out his words in a furious stream. "For the small sum of fifty cents, half a dollar, five puny dimes, I offer here the secret of quick cure for more bodily ills than man can enumerate. Coughs, colds, chills, fevers, bruises, sweats, sprains, strains, cuts, abrasions, and some kidney complaints yield readily to the steady application of Osprey's Liniment. I want you—"

He glanced down. Herbie and Vicky were getting Marcia and Paula through the crowd fast. The reporters were smirking disgustedly at each other. A cheap publicity stunt! The cop had faltered, not knowing whether or not he had the right to evict a patent-medicine man from the parking-yard. "I want you," Raoul went on invitingly, "to hear the testimonials of some users. First, Mr. Applegate—"

He jumped into the press of people. He ducked low. He whipped off his hat and his topcoat. He stuffed the hat into a coat pocket and turned the coat wrong-side out. Hastily he threaded his way past several people who were waiting attentively for "Mr. Applegate" to take his place. Mr. Applegate never did. And nobody in the crowd identified the debonaire young man in the fawn suit with the gray-hatted, blue-coated medicine man. Not even the cop.

Raoul hunted through the cars. He found the space where he thought the Grosses' car had been parked, but it was empty. Soon, against a rail, he saw Vicky and Marcia and Herbie and the Grosses' chauffeur. He came up.

"Where are we?" Herbie, weak from laughter, managed to say: "Ask Charles."

The chauffeur was apologetic. "Mr. Hendon rushed up, and requested permission to take the car for a moment. He drove off—hurriedly."

"And Andy and his charming wife," Marcia said, "took a taxi back to town." She held out her hand. "Thanks, bright eyes. That saved us a nasty picture in tomorrow's paper."

"Liniment," Raoul replied, "is a great panacea. But where the deuce did Bob go? I don't want to get picked up for impersonating a medicine-show."

Vicky said restrainedly: "I think—he probably went back to Miami. He has a phobia about bad publicity."

"But after all, he left you." "People with phobias don't think." She turned to the chauffeur. "Did he look crazed—terrified?"

"Well, Mrs. Hendon, he seemed—in a hurry." "It's the sort of thing Bob couldn't face," Vicky said gently. "Anyhow—the Grosses?"

Herbie started to laugh. Marcia laughed too, suddenly and in her husband's face. "Go on, Charlie, stir up a cab." Raoul held out his arm to Vicky. "May I?"

She took it. She smiled at him, but her eyes were serious. "There are times," she said, "when it pays to be crazy, and I never liked the Andersons. I think—you have freed us!"

VICKY found Bob in their rooms. He had opened every window and was standing before one of them, beating on his chest, inhaling and exhaling. She hadn't known what to expect. Maybe that he'd be weeping with humiliation for having behaved so badly. At least that he would be cursing—himself or the universe; it wouldn't have mattered. But he looked self-possessed, standing there sucking in air, banging on his chest.

"Well?" she said frigidly. "Oh, hello, Vicky! I thought you'd be along soon." "What are you doing?"

He smiled with assurance—too much assurance. "Getting a little air. I suddenly realized I'd smoked a whole pack of cigarettes, sitting here waiting for you to show up."

"Oh." "What's the matter?" "Why—nothing." She took off her coat and hat. "You act as if I'd done something." He accused her with his intonation.

"No. Nothing. I *did* wonder, of course, where you went in the Grosses' car—and why you went so quickly."

"Wasn't it perfectly obvious?"

"You mean—that you thought we were all in a posterous mess, and you saw the newspaper men coming, and ran?"

"Exactly."

She nodded. "Yes. It was *perfectly* obvious."

HE closed a couple of the windows and said impatiently: "I mean, wasn't it perfectly obvious *why* I ran? What did happen, anyway? Did they photograph that brawl? Did you get arrested?"

Vicky sat down on the bed and stared incredulously at Bob. "Why didn't you ask that right off?"

"Great heavens! Am I nuts? Why didn't you tell me first off? Why did you come in giving me that 'Well?' stuff?"

"Because you ran away."

"All right. We'll get to that later, since you don't seem to understand what I was doing. Go ahead. What did happen?"

"Raoul got us out of it."

"How? Money?"

"No." Vicky lay back on the bed and closed her eyes. For an instant one corner of her mouth twitched. Then she remembered that she was having a deadly scrap with Bob. Her Bob. Once again her voice was level and concise. "He jumped up on the fence and pretended the whole thing was a gag to attract a crowd so he could sell liniment. Remember the bottle he bought? When the newspapermen got the idea that the scrap was a publicity stunt, they practically trampled each other trying to get away."

"Pretty cute," Bob said. It was apparent that he was glad the incident was closed. It was also clear that he didn't think much of Raoul's method of solving it.

"Cute?" Vicky's voice was sweetly poisonous. "It was genius—unexcelled brilliance: the coolest sort of quick thinking—imaginative—"

"All right. Granted. And you still don't see why I scrambled?"

She shook her head.

Bob sat down on the bed. He began wearily: "I've told you what it was like to peddle newspapers in the snow without decent shoes—"

"And to try to live on a quarter a day. And how it felt to be beaten by other kids on the block. And how brave your mother was. And your dad." She was infinitely weary, immeasurably sarcastic.

He nodded heavily. "And I've told you how I worked for a cobbler. And repaired shoes nights to get through high school—"

"—and college."

"Yeah. I guess I've told you what it felt like to have second-hand clothes at dances. And I've told you how the guy I bought leather from offered me a job."

"Yes," she said. "Yes, Bob. And the old man who advised you to play straight, play hard and play safe. And you've done all three."

"As well as I could. Well enough so we can be down here for a month, Vicky. I've tried. Fought, struggled—"

All that, she had admired in him. It was the essence of the things she had been trained to believe when she was young. The stuff that made Americans. It was what had finally won her to Bob: the fact that he was a diligent, honest, ambitious man. A self-made man, a man who had gone a long way, and who intended to keep forging ahead on the hard rails of his career as long as breath was in him. To hear him repeat it all now, moved Vicky. She thought that he was going to weigh what he was and had done against one instant of panic. She said: "It's O.K., Bobby. I'll forgive you."

He was startled and incomprehensibly annoyed. "Forgive me? For what?"

She lay back again slowly on the bed. "I interrupted you—"

He nodded. "Look. I made my way by two things: thought and will-power. That's all I have to go on. Not sentiment: reality. We're agreed on that, aren't we?" "Yes."

"That's all I want to know. See here, Vicky: use your brain. I'm president of the Hendon Belt Corporation. I employ quite a bunch of men. They know me. I spend

a quarter of my time out at the factory. Production means almost more to me than sales. That's one thing. It's my plant. I made it, and I get the business for it. All right. I advertise in ten national magazines. And with what?"

She was staring at him—doubtfully, unhappily. She was beginning to understand.

"With my portrait," he went on. "Me, looking into the camera and pointing my finger and saying my message. *Hendon Belts are Best*. My word. Me saying it. All over the country. To seventeen millions of people. Now do you get it?"

"I think so."

He got up, lighted a cigarette, walked. "Suddenly—those damned overfed oversophisticated women have to leap at each other in public. Like a couple of fishwives! There I am. I turned back too late to do anything. I saw the photographers, grinning from ear to ear, rushing in there with the cops. I knew just what that meant."

"Just what did it mean?" she asked.

"It meant that tomorrow there would be pictures in the local papers. The tabloid. A picture of Raoul and Herbie standing there holding those two dames apart. 'Society Matrons Do a Fast Round at Hialeah.' I can see the caption. And another picture in the courthouse. 'Booked as Witnesses in Race Track Hen Fight.' I can see that one too. You and me in it. Staring at the camera, like idiots. Our names, and who we were. Why, tonight, Vicky, those very pictures might be going out all over the world! How was I to know that Raoul was going to pull things out of the fire by some nitwit inspiration? They'd be hot news pictures. All the seventeen millions—who have seen me pointing at them and telling about my belts—would see me down in Miami, at a racetrack, with what they would take for a bunch of drunks. . . . My workmen—the world! Then what would happen to Hendon Belts?"

"What?" she asked indecisively. "You'd be kidded—in New York. But after all, they weren't using your belts in the fight. And one didn't break. And they didn't photograph that."

"Are you crazy?"

"I don't know," Vicky said. "One of us must be."

He sat down again. "You don't understand. You don't understand public opinion. My business is *me*. I can't afford to be made a fool of."

SHE pulled from her index of acrimonious thoughts the material for another question. "Suppose they *had* arrested all of us and taken us to jail?"

"In the mood you're in," he answered glumly, "I can't expect you to listen. Don't you think that flashed through my mind, along with everything else? *Before* everything else? Do you think it was pleasant for me to do what I did? To sacrifice you? It's damn' tough to have to put an ideal ahead of the woman you're nuts about. What I *did* think was that it might be darned useful, if you all got pinched, for some one to be free who could arrange bail in a hurry. Though I didn't expect I'd need to do that. After all, it would probably take more than a cat-fight to hold men like Gross and Anderson and McLiess."

"All that flashed through your mind?"

"Yes."

"You didn't just—see a jam coming up, and get terrified, and run?"

He spoke desperately. "Did I get terrified when the mate and McLiess went overboard the other day?"

"No," Vicky admitted.

"Did I lose my head?"

"No."

"Did I use it? Did I do the two things that were of any use, or did I do something hysterical?" Suddenly he began to cry. He looked beseechingly at her and sobbed. She couldn't bear that.

"You used your head, Bob." She got up slowly. She walked to him and took his face in her hands. She turned it up and looked into his eyes. His responsive stare was sad and yet determined. She felt, then, like a stupid kid. A refractory and unreasonable kid. After all, there was a deep reason behind Bob's fear of bad appearances. Two reasons, if you thought it over. He'd appeared at a disadvantage all during his youth, and he had fought gamely to get free of such appearances. Besides, he was, as he said, really his business. It meant a tremendous lot to him. More, as he had said—honestly enough—than her comfort.

He was right. He *had* thought—thought the way they had agreed always to think, the way her mother had brought her up to think. And just because Raoul's trick had been so theatrical and so effective, she had been lured into a lot of emotional nonsense by it. That was the trouble with Raoul. That was why Raoul had persuaded her in the first place to sneak out of a college dormitory with a packed suitcase as dawn was breaking.

She kissed Bob's forehead. "I've been dreadful," she murmured. "I'm sorry, Bob. Please forget it."

He hugged her. "Sure. I wish to God the whole thing had never happened. I've suffered enough over it, the past hour. It doesn't matter so much, with the others. That McLiess—he already has a dizzy reputation. Gross is an engineer; his private life is his own business. Andy might get kidded, in that store of his, but the store doesn't rest on his good name—"

She stroked his hair. "I guess I've been forgetting a lot in the last couple of days," she said. "You're sorry the silly thing happened. I'm glad. It's taught me a lesson."

Bob began to grin.

"Not to go to horse-races, you mean?"

Vicky's smile was gentle.

"To respect the man I love." . . .

The MacTavish was sitting at a table which he had moved as near as possible to a window. It was mid-morning, and the weather was still gray and chilly. There came a knock at the door. The MacTavish was expecting the tailor. In his oddly meek voice he said: "Come in."

The door opened, but nobody entered. He looked up. A girl was standing there. The MacTavish took an optician's glass out of the better of his two eyes. He imitated a verbal usage of his master's. "Something?"

She nodded amiably. "This is Mr. McLiess's suite, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"I'm looking for Mr. McLiess."

"Indeed?" It was a rhetorical question.

"My name is Joy."

"Oh. Did he tell you to call here?"

"No."

"Have you a message for him?"

"I want to apologize to him."

The MacTavish stared. "If you call him at about six o'clock this evening, he'll be able to make an appointment for your apology."

"I couldn't. Can't I come in and wait?"

"I think he would prefer that you didn't."

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Joy smiled and came in anyway. She shut the door.

"Please leave the door open."

"Why?"

"When two members of the opposite sex who are not related and not married wish to remain in the chamber of a hostelry,—or remain in one against their wishes,—the door must be left ajar. It is a universal regulation."

Joy giggled. "A lot of people break that law."

The MacTavish stiffened slightly. "Doubtless," he said.

SHE sat down. She took off her hat. He returned to his work. After a while she said: "Who are you?"

"I am Mr. McLiesh's valet."

"Really! A real true valet? I've never seen one before! Of course, I may have passed one on the street. But I didn't know it was a valet."

"There is nothing characteristic about a valet."

"You use awfully big words," she commented. "You must be pretty intelligent."

Joy's appearance, which would move any man, together with her naive charm, caused even the MacTavish to budge a bit. "I've had some access to information and experience."

"Experience! So have I! Plenty! But information?" She thought a moment and said disappointedly: "No."

Then she brightened. "What are you doing?"

"Cleaning a watch."

"Do you have to take them apart to clean them?"

"You do."

"And can you put everything back?"

"Naturally."

"Do you always clean Mr. McLiesh's watch?"

"Watches." He has six. This is the first one I have ever cleaned."

They ran out of conversation—for a moment. Joy was first to feel the blank. "You see," she said, "I just had to apologize to Mr. McLiesh. I got him into a terrible jam yesterday. I met him at the race-track. He said he'd like to see me again sometime. Then he went. And I ran after him to see if maybe he could get a fellow for Elsie. Just as I caught up, one of the ladies he was with said that I was a tramp. And another lady hit her. And she started to pull her hair." Joy described all that had followed, including her terrified escape from the scene of drama, in vast detail. "So it was really my fault," she finished, "because whether or not I am a tramp is not worth fighting about. I do the best I can. I work whenever I can. I'm not really a tramp at all—not anything like it. But it wouldn't look so good if you just put all the things I've done for fun—and all the unfortunate things—end to end. So I thought all night about it while I was selling cigarettes, and I made the wrong change and everything, and I decided I'd better tell him personally. I came here, and they said he was out; but I called from a booth and got the operator to tell me his room number, and I came up to wait. I thought I'd sit in the hall if I had to."

"Mr. McLiesh is extraordinarily resourceful," the MacTavish said, when she stopped.

"He's very quick. And generous. Look here. Would you say I was a tramp?"

The MacTavish was on the point of announcing his unfitness to judge, when she plunged into her life history. She gave it color and variety and point of view. He went on patiently with the watch. When she had finished, he said: "No. I wouldn't. I'd say you were a very nice person."

Joy laughed heartily. "Oh! That! You know—I'd forgotten what started me off. I really don't mind what people think of me. All I mind is how I feel about myself. But here I am talking and talking. Look, Mr.—"

"MacTavish."

"Suppose you tell me about you?"

He looked at her steadily. He almost smiled. "My story is the male counterpart of your own," he said. "Excepting, of course, that I lack—a correlative attractiveness."

"That's a pleasant compliment!"

"My experience with—dalliance—has been nil. I—"

"You mean, you don't know any girls? A nice, quiet, industrious person like you?"

He waived the specific charge. "I found reading a splendid pastime. Something of a substitute. In the past nine years I have had thirty-eight positions—most of them of brief duration."

"Yes. I know how it is."

"As a matter of fact, although this is a personal subject, and I have not mentioned it to Mr. McLiesh, on the day we happened to meet, I was contemplating suicide."

She was horrified. "Oh! Golly! You can't do that!"

His composed, humble features were turned toward the girl. He was pleased with the dramatic effect, but he did not show it. "I hadn't planned on anything—immediate. I had merely determined that I would think it over for a period. A year. You see—I was hungry."

She only nodded at that. She knew.

"And between my thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh jobs. My mother—had gone on relief. The prospects were bare. And I found myself thinking in a circle. I have taken courses, by correspondence, in all subjects I could afford. Ninety-one, to date; and I have eleven more in the mails at present, as I believe I have satisfied Mr. McLiesh to some extent. One can only hope and try, in any case."

Yes—I was meditating self-destruction. I had just finished a course in archaeology; but like everything else, while it was absorbing, it offered no practical employment. And my pride was hurt. It seemed unreasonable that anyone who had become the receptacle of so much information should be so lacking in personality—so bereft of aggressiveness as to be unable to serve at all."

She looked compassionately at him. "Why didn't you take a course in personality?"

"I did. It was the one thing I could never get passing grades in."

"Isn't that funny?"

"What?"

"It's all I've got. And I get along fine. And you're really terribly bright, and you don't—that is, you didn't get on at all."

"It is ironic," the MacTavish said.

RAOUL came into the room. He was followed by a porter who was carrying his golf-clubs.

He looked at the MacTavish and the watch-works and Joy. His mustache twitched. "I hope," he said casually, "that I haven't interrupted you, the MacTavish?"

The young man turned crimson and then very white. He couldn't say anything.

Joy jumped out of her chair. "That's mean! I didn't think you'd be able to be mean!"

Raoul's face changed expression. "It was, Joy," he said hesitantly. "It was darn' mean. I didn't mean it to be so. I'm sorry, the MacTavish."

The MacTavish blinked and looked out the window. His Adam's apple ran up and down like an elevator. "A jest, between gentlemen—" he began.

Joy's faith in human nature came back like a wave. "I knew you were just not thinking." Mr. McLiesh, I came here to apologize. I have been talking to your valet. I was waiting for you." Again, completely, she went through her story.

Raoul looked at her for a while and then took a golf-club from his bag and knocked an imaginary ball down a hypothetical fairway.

Again Joy wound up her burden of discontent. "So you see, it wasn't even worth it!"

He answered seriously: "Joy, my dear, it wasn't you. Marcia and Paula stand at somewhat opposite poles. The thing had been building all afternoon—like a thunder-storm. You were just—a steeple, a place for the first bolt to strike. Do me a favor, will you? Forget it. Act as if it never happened. That's all any of us can do about things like that."

Joy nodded. "The trouble," she said, "is with Mr. Anderson's parents."

Raoul's reply was a half-amused, half-quizzical frown.

"They shouldn't have raised a boy to let a woman be that way. Well—good-by, Mr. McLiesh. Good-by, Mr. MacTavish. I got to get to the Jiffy Club. We're having fittings for new costumes."

She went.

Raoul lighted a cigarette. He regarded his valet. Finally he said: "What did you think of her, the MacTavish?"

The MacTavish was not accustomed to giving opinions about women. He tried to stand up to do it. He spilled the watch-works on the floor. Both men knelt to retrieve them.

In the hall, Joy passed Vicky, who had remembered during the night the expression Raoul had worn as he was

told of Bob's flight from the race-track. Vicky was on the way to Raoul's apartment to explain Bob's reasons—a precipitate and not very well considered move; but when she saw the silver-haired girl come out and close the door, she changed her mind. She thought angrily that it was a good thing she hadn't run up a few minutes earlier.

Vicky didn't speak, so Joy didn't. They pretended they hadn't recognized each other.

Chapter Six



OB and Raoul stood in the bow of a motor-driven flatboat holding long-handled, five-prong fish spears. Vicky sat behind them on the wooden hood of the engine. It was eleven o'clock, or after, and pitch dark; the sky was overcast, and not even the star-specks shone on the glass-smooth water.

The boat crept forward into a fan of light which spread from a single hissing gasoline lamp on the bow over the water to the mangroves lining the shores, and down into it, illuminating the bottom.

The bottom, visible clearly for a fifty-foot arc in front of the bow, was being scrutinized by both men. They were "proging" down in the Keys. It was Raoul's party—a return entertainment for the Hendersons' dinner. At a convenient fishing camp, Marcia and Herbie were already asleep in their cabin, lulled by the wind in the trees, the ululation of the sea, and the fragrance of a tray of powder burning like joss beside their twin beds to ward off mosquitoes.

"Put her over a bit to port," Raoul called to the negro who was steering.

The bow turned. The men stared. Vicky, behind them, also stared into the limpid radiance.

Under their eyes was another universe—a universe of sand and coral rock, of mud and grass beds. It was like no familiar sight on earth. Its vegetation was lunar; seaweeds and fungi—distorted, unreal and vividly colored. Coral made submarine towers and arches. Coral grew to ward the surface in red and purple fans. A score of what were apparently plants were not plants at all, but animals—sponges, and anemones and long-spiked, jet-black sea urchins—opening, closing, undulating, stretching out many-hued tentacles, bending in the tide; a miniature forest, fabulous and deadly. Through that wilderness of changing scenery moved its creatures, and ceaselessly the light caught them.

Here in the white-sanded abyss of a tide-excavated hole was a family of snappers with redly shining eyes. Next, on the grass bed, a half dozen crayfish, lobster-like, but without claws, their long "whips" extended, their great legs moving with slow intention, their flecked and segmented tails occasionally hurrying them backward through the sea. . . . Another deep. A green angel-fish sliding magnificently through a coral arch. A cow-fish peering up at the tentative daylight that passed over it. Fish, then, in schools—red, green, golden yellow, far brighter than birds. Yonder, on the sand, a grayish-green torpedo—four feet long, motionless—a barracuda, asleep, or perhaps waiting to shoot like a bullet at some incautious denizen of those weird waterways. Then—a monster: A long milky white shape that moved into the light and looked up and shot suddenly off to darkness.

"Shark," Raoul murmured. "Big one. A shade more to the left, there, Joe!"

Raoul too had seen a monster out in the dim edge of the light. Now they all saw it: a stingaree. A giant thing, flat, so that it could navigate shallow water, with a long tail in which there stood a horrible spike. Its eyes, bulging above its shapeless head, glittered in malevolence at the men in the boat.

"It's dreadful!" Vicky whispered.

Raoul had raised his spear. Now, slowly, he lowered its five points into the water and let them slide toward the ray like a billiard-player's cue. Then he struck, with all his force.

They could see the five points go home, in the center of the ray—a gray and grisly thing, four feet across. The shock made its edges convulse. It surged up toward the surface, banked itself, turned, skidded, and came toward the boat, carrying the shaft of the spear vertically in the air.

Involuntarily they all dodged. The spear-shaft cracked against the boat. The ray turned. Bob said afterward that it tried to strike the lamp with its sting as it passed.

They watched it. For less than a second they could see it speeding away on the surface, dragging the spear which Raoul had released at the instant of contact, going at an incredible speed. It left behind in the black water a wide swath of phosphorescence. Already the negro was turning the barge.

"We've lost him!" Bob said.

Raoul shook his head. "Hear him? He'll start in circles, trying to shake out that spear. Let's go, Joe!"

The motor throbbed. The squared-ended boat boiled up foam in front of the light. Faintly, in the distance, they could hear intermittent splashing. It grew louder. The negro cut the engine and shot the beam of a flashlight over the water. It picked up the ray—an enormous thing in the night, its white underside showing as it jumped; its sting whipped time after time against the handle of the spear. It beat the water to foam.

"Better get another in him, Mr. McLeish," the negro said. "That's a pretty good-sized one."

Raoul nodded. He picked up a harpoon. The motor started. They moved toward the ray.

"I'm frightened," Vicky said.

The negro's voice was melodious. "I don't reckon he's big enough. But a bigger one—a ray twenty foot wide—might leap right on the boat and mash it. Two men got killed that way last year."

Raoul threw the harpoon.

The ray ran again. But now Raoul had a rope on him. It sizzled from its bucket out over the bow. Ten minutes later they brought the ray alongside and killed it. After some straining, Joe pulled it up on the stern of the boat and made it fast. "Must weigh more than a hundred pounds," he said jubilantly. "Boy! That's a ray!"

Bob and Raoul took up their posts again. The boat once more crawled forward over the avenue of water that lay between two mangrove-covered islands.

Bob looked into the evil, fascinating depths. "I didn't know there was any danger in this sport." He sounded full of doubt.

Raoul shrugged. "Danger in any sort of hunting, isn't there? You go out to kill. You take some chance of being killed."

"But—suppose that had been a twenty-foot ray?"

"All the better. We'd have hung up a record."

"Is it safe for Vicky?"

"We have guns. We're all right." Raoul grinned, and the light thrown up from the water made his face demoniac. "A big ray might swamp us and crush us. It's been known to happen. I can think of lots of things that might happen. Only—we have the tools to prevent it, if we're quick and clever."

"What might happen?" Bob asked morbidly.

Raoul chuckled. "Well—a sawfish could tip us over. And I wouldn't like to be in that water. The Gulf Stream was bad enough. Saws hit boats—eh, Joe?"

"Yes suh! I took a bill three feet long out of a boat like this!"

"A big croc might decide to come out after us," Raoul continued amiably. "A bear. Unlikely—but you want to know what might happen. We could be upset in several ways. Then we'd have to worry about morays—which get to be seven or eight feet long, and strike like rattlesnakes, and put plenty of streptococcus in the wounds; and sharks and rays and barracuda"—his voice lifted—"like that one! Hit it!"

Bob looked. In the water, as the boat slid toward it, was a fish six feet long. It lay motionless. Bob gripped his spear and slid it through the water. He aimed and struck. He felt the tines pierce the fish. But he forgot to let go. The "cuda, with one prodigious spasm, wrenched the spear out of its back and cracked Bob heavily on the head with the handle.

Raoul grabbed his arm. "Hurt you, old man?"

Bob rubbed his head. "I don't think this is any sort of thing for Vicky to be doing! No. I'm not hurt. Bumped, that's all."

VICKY, sitting behind them, seemed to share Raoul's feeling for proging. The danger, if indeed there was any, only excited her. They were catching food. A dozen crayfish, and a big grouper—A salad and a chowder fit for

a gourmet. Moreover the barracuda and sharks and rays seemed like enemies, creatures feared and killed for protection by primitive man. In fact, they were so destructive of food- and game-fish that some of the clubs exhorted their members to destroy them. Silhouetted against the single light, Raoul had looked tense and alert, and his eyes and teeth had flashed. He had gone back a hundred thousand years. To prey was only part of to be preyed on in the remote, ancestral emotion which possessed him; and he knew it, and indulged it; and Vicky understood it. "I love it!" Vicky whispered.

But Bob shook his head. "I think we better quit. It's late. And what's the sense of risking your neck for a few groceries—or even to kill a ray?"

All he said was true and sensible. It was late. They had the very fish the Club's chef had jokingly "ordered" them to spear. If, through some fluke of darkness and excitement and enraged beast, any one of them were hurt, they would never have forgiven themselves for going out that night. Nevertheless both Raoul and Vicky felt a keen disappointment as Raoul said:

"O.K., Joe! Let's go home."

JOE put out the light and speeded up the motor. They hummed through the water in deep dark. The shore was a faint blur, and what landmarks Joe could discern among the mangrove tops not even Raoul—who knew the Keys—could tell. They might have been diving in ink, or flying through ether. Only an occasional luminous effervescence in their wake was light, and it gave off none. They were in a place that had been untouched since the beginning of time—remote, silent, full of hostile life; and they depended upon a fragile boat and their own nerve for existence. Eight hours from Broadway—in as deep a fastness as there is in Africa.

"I'm not sleepy," Vicky murmured close to Raoul's ear. "I'll lie awake all night thinking about this. It was terrifying—and beautiful. The fish down there! Seeing Mars couldn't be any stranger!"

He nodded. By and by he lighted a cigarette. Vicky put her hand on his arm, so he lighted a second from the first and handed it to her. If Bob saw the meeting and separation of those cherry-red dots in the plush dark, he said nothing. At last they picked up the lights on the Club dock. The moon—a late, brown moon, half-eroded away—broke through on the eastern horizon. They made fast. Joe carried the crayfish and the grouper up to the refrigerator. Bob and Vicky said good-night. And Raoul went to his cabin.

It was a warm night. The heat of the day had been held in the cabin. Raoul opened his windows. An owl hooted. Crickets chirped. The wind began to whisper. His curtains flapped softly. The brownishness of the moon became silver.

It occurred to him that Vicky had meant, by saying she'd lie awake all night, that she might be out in the moonlight, later, when Bob was asleep. The thought, although he tried to tell himself it was foolish, changed his plans. With more eagerness than he realized, Raoul took a pipe from his suitcase and a pouch of tobacco. He put them in his shirt pocket. He went outdoors again, and walked down a path between the cabins where other anglers—men and women, a score or more from Kansas and Oregon and Boston—lay dreaming about giant fish heaving out of the sea and swallowing them, boat and all. He passed the lounge of the clubhouse, dimly lighted by a single bulb that ran on a storage battery. He could see the dark maw of the stone fireplace, and the rustic furniture with its chintz cushions, and the mounted fish that hung upon the walls in ravenous postures—marlin and sail and barracuda and dolphin—a huge reddish mangrove snapper, an Allison tuna, a hound-fish, and an angel-fish, and the hide of a crocodile they'd shot within a stone's throw of the camp.

He turned onto the planks of the dock. There too a light burned, casting more shadows than illumination upon the fishing fleet, and visiting cruisers, and a big Diesel yacht from New York. The world was asleep. He found, at the very tip of the pier, a place where he was alone. He sat down with his back against a piling and listened to the night noises ashore, and the swish and slap and ripple of animals in the sea, smoking his pipe.

He knew Vicky was coming along the pier before he actually heard her. He looked up.

She whispered; "Mind if I join you?"

"No. I thought you might come here."

"You did?"

"You said you wouldn't be able to sleep."

She sat with her back to the same piling. She was wearing a gauzy wrap over her pajamas. She had a package of cigarettes. "So you were waiting for me?"

He let his heart beat. "Yes."

"Why?"

"I don't know. You tell me why you came looking for me."

She ignored that. "You were waiting because you're a sentimental person."

"Maybe. That's what I wondered while I sat there."

His feet were crossed on the dock. The light was faint—the old moon and the single bulb ashore. They were quiet for a minute or two. Then there was a loud slap near-by.

"What was that?" she asked, frightened.

"A ray. They jump—and land flat like that."

"What for?"

"I don't know. Maybe to shake off parasites."

"Oh."

Another silence. "Bob's asleep," she said softly. "He was exhausted."

"Mmmmm."

That put the burden of the next whispered sentence on her, but it was not a heavy burden.

"Difficult," she said.

"What?"

"Are you going to make me say it? That's not fair."

"You say it."

"All right. Difficult, Raoul, to sit in this place, like this, on this particular night—remembering you, and me, and—"

She felt him nod. She barely heard him whisper. "Yeah, Vicky. Difficult."

She edged away from that subject a little, and with adroitness, because she changed not the topic of themselves, but their relation to that topic in time. "Were you very broken up when I left you?"

"Were you, Vicky?"

"I asked you, first!"

He chuckled. But his answer was not quite amused. "I wasn't—to tell the truth, Vicky. Not—right after you left. Stunned, maybe. Although I'd expected it. I'd been feeling you going, for a long time."

"Had you? And I've always thought it had been an absolute surprise. A clean break."

"That couldn't happen. People don't just get sore at each other in a minute. Not people in real life, people in love. The books all say so, but the books are wrong. A woman doesn't catch her husband in what is called *flagrante delicto*, and walk out forever. Not a decent woman, not a sane woman. She puts up with a few things, forgives some more. Forgets others—is silent about another group. She may even think she has harbored no resentment and no distaste; then—some little thing breaks open the whole dam, and she goes. A man is just the same."

"Then—why did I leave you?"

He faced her and took her hand. She shivered—and let him hold it. "Haven't you said why to everybody in the world, a thousand times? Didn't you say why to me?"

"Does that embarrass you?"

"I don't think so. I think it annoys me."

"Annoys you?" Her voice was wondering.

"For the same reason that question does. You assume that you are right, and I am all wet. I wasn't any good. I wouldn't work. I wouldn't do things methodically or by rule. I'm a playboy, a man about town. You couldn't reform me, so you gave me up—and you have no hesitancy in saying so."

"But you—never said anything to anybody!"

RAOUL laughed quietly. "Strong and silent? Vicky, Vicky, Vicky! Nobody on earth is strong and silent. Everybody is afraid of some things. Everyone's weak to some temptations or in some situations. And everyone will talk about himself to somebody."

"Then why—"

There was a long silence.

"Why what, Vicky?" When she didn't answer, he relighted his pipe first and said afterward: "I think I know what you were going to ask. Why did I let you leave me? Was that it?"

"I—I was going to ask what your side was."

"My side?" Raoul puffed meditatively and slapped at a mosquito. "I didn't have one. You did. So you went away. I let you go because I thought you were right—for you. I decided you couldn't live—my way."

"But what is your way?"

His shrug was made against her shoulder. "To have none. I'd like to be able to say: 'This is good, and I'll do it; that's bad—I'll abstain.' But I don't know enough. Maybe, when I'm fifty or eighty, I'll have an opinion. But now—it just seems silly to hear people discuss government, and the taxes, and love, and sex, and everything on earth, from lynching, to battleships versus airplanes, in the light of positive right and wrong."

"Then—you think of yourself as a person who is collecting data to form a creed eventually?"

"Nope. A person who is just living."

"Messily—pointlessly."

"So you've said."

"But you can't just live! You've got to do."

"Mmmm. We disagreed on that also, I recall. I wanted to send funny-looking guys like the MacFavish to college, and lend a doctor the dough to do experiments, and ship a tubercular secretary to a farm. People I knew, people I saw—people I felt would be worth helping; and damned few are."

"But that's just—giving money!"

AGAIN Raoul was laughing. "So familiar, your voice sounds! Sure. Maybe that's all I have to give. That, and a couple of laughs—and a problem to a very lovely young woman who wants her giving to have labels on it and to be wrapped in paper watermarked, *This is a Good Deed*. I hate good deeds. Most of the ones I've done were notable fizzes."

"You still think I'm lovely."

"Do you want to return to a personal basis?"

She nodded. "Though I hate myself for it! I must be tired—or crazy. But tonight—I remember too well. I feel the way I did while I was waiting for you that gray morning: waiting in the dormitory, shaking like a leaf. Seared—sure that I'd be in hell within a month. Running away with a man I hardly knew—not even sure that we were going to be married that day. It is kind of silly. They say words over you." She fell silent.

"Say words?"

"You know. That afternoon we stood in the office of that justice of the peace—and he said words. Then all my fears melted away. I was happy. I was set free by them to love you. Then—afterward, in Reno, the judge said words. And I wasn't Mrs. McLiesh any more. I went back to my hotel—and wept."

"Funny. I didn't weep—for six months."

"Then you did? Really, Raoul?"

"Then."

"Finally," she continued, after a pause, "Bob and I walked down the church aisle. Mother was there, and all my old friends, and everything was right and proper and good. And a minister said more words—words which make it very wrong for me to be sitting here in the dark talking to you. That's that's silly. I mean—I'm letting myself think so tonight."

"I'm glad you caught yourself," he replied whimsically.

"You sounded like me."

"I did, didn't I?"

"Like McLiesh—Lord of the Uncertain, Knight of the Doubt, Prince of Laissez Faire and Doctor of Scepticism." She sighed. "You're fun, Raoul. Too much fun. But—olly, it gets dull always to be on a routine!"

"My point again, honey. Is life supposed to be dull?"

"It's supposed to be regulated," she answered stanchly.

"By whom? For what?"

"Let's not argue any longer."

"All right." He knocked out his pipe. His own thoughts were unusually disheveled—for him. One mind cannot contain both thought and a passion.

"A penny," she said.

"All right. I was thinking about making love to you."

"Why don't you?"

He was barely able to keep his voice orderly. "Your rules—"

"But—darling. Think. Think of Switzerland! Rome! Think of the cottage we had in Juan les Pins! A hundred places. Do you feel strange? Wicked?"

"No, Vicky. You're the one who has—tomorrows."

She put her arm around him and looked up at him. "Don't you remember me, Raoul?"

He nodded. His lips were against hers. "Yes," he whispered. "I do. I remember you, Vicky."

He stood up. He pulled her to her feet. They looked toward the dim light at the end of the docks. They were very calm, suddenly—very assured. To them, two years of marriage had become a long and lovely time—the two years afterward—short, at least.

They started down the pier swinging hands and laughing—gone native, in a voluptuous instant—and like natives, finding the functions of the universe not august, but delightful. Their mood was fragile, however, because it was dishonest. The slightest flaw or impact could shatter it.

And Raoul said unthinkingly: "I wish your mother could see you now!"

Vicky gasped and stopped dead. "My mother!"

"She'd throw furniture downstairs." Then he saw what he had done. The ecstasy was riven, the necromancy ended. Heat and acid spread like a stain through his body. But he kept his voice impassioned. "Come on, Vicky—your mother's far away."

She jabbed the dusk with a monosyllabic laugh. "Far away! My mother! Why—oh, Raoul, why did you have to mention my poor dear mother at a time like this?"

He knew that his intention was irredeemably defeated. He took refuge in intellectualism, in what he thought was honesty, in what was really revenge. "The reference was intended to be humorous."

"It was meant to show me what a fool I was! Did you think you could keep me hypnotized and at the same time remind me of how crooked and mean I was being?"

"My mind," he answered quickly, "isn't compartmented, like yours. To any one situation, I can bring thoughts of everything else, and without losing my balance or abandoning my course. I always know what I'm doing." He lowered his voice to a restrained murmur. "But we never did—in the old days, did we? You had reservations. There are invariably things you'd rather not think about, even when you make love. And the injection of your mother always meant arson and sabotage inside you."

"You never liked my mother, did you?" She was breathing heavily.

He hit back. "I thought her abominable. I could never understand how a woman of her achievements in hypocrisy could have a daughter like you."

Vicky stopped. "That's just stubborn! You would never try to appreciate her."

"My dear!" Exasperation had commandeered his tone. "Your mother is selfish. She lived on me. When you went home to her, she tried to send you back to me. I was the money-bags. She wrote letters to me telling me that you were desolate, when I knew that you were principally peeved. When the letters stopped, I was quite sure that you were in love again—and that the man was what is commonly called well heeled."

"You are lousy, aren't you!" She slapped him with the words, slowly, sharply, one by one.

"Moreover," he continued, "she is a hypocrite. I think that she has blackmailing tendencies. Judging from the way she handled the ample allowance we sent her, she is unable to count—hence, an imbecile. I hate to say it, darling; but the opportunity has suddenly overwhelmed me. All these years I have burned with an ambition to tell you what I really thought of your mother. She's rude and grabbing. That much can be attested by witnesses. I further aver that she's snide and conniving. She puts up the most monstrous pretense of good-will and good work, and she keeps every saintly date on the calendar to the letter. But she has laundries fired for dropping a basket because the walk was slippery when the poor devils need work. She's a screamer—a forger; she had no hesitation in signing my name to a check when the money I gave her for the summer amazingly ran out. Darling, I could detail the evil and witless deeds of your mother until sunup."

"What's got into you?"

HE dropped her hand; he drew a deep breath and exhaled. "Just madness, I guess. Or—maybe you rushed to the defense of your poor mother once too often. Think of it! Maybe if you'd put in a good word for her when

we were married, one more syllable—I would have left you instead of you me."

"You've spoiled everything!"

He shrugged lifelessly and sat down. She sat again beside him. "This," he said, "was to be a gesture against the fates. A moment stolen in the teeth of my mother-in-law. And then you murmured about how poor and dear she was. That made my blood run cold. Vicky, your mother is not as bad as I have just said. But she is not pure silver threads among the gold. She is a creature of habit, and a selfish one. She is not very well informed upon current matters, and not especially tolerant. She has lived all her life by a system she did not much enjoy; and like all such people, she is getting back at life by sticking that system on others. To the extent she has succeeded with you, I deplore her. Otherwise, I'd be for letting her alone. You can't make her happy. That's the keystone of her whole scheme."

"Of course, that's too ridiculous to be answered! She's very happy now. She adores Bob."

"And does Bob adore her?"

"Certainly! You should see them together!"

"Well—Bob's like her."

"I presume that's also meant to be insulting?"

Raoul took out his pipe. He filled it and lighted it. "Vicky, I see I must remind you that you are stepping beyond the bounds again. A habit of your mother's. You have just called me lousy. You have spurred me. You have resented me and reviled me. All, for what I said about your poor dear mother—who is as strong as a German tumbler and as rich as two sons-in-law could be wheeled into making her. I beg to recall to you that I am no longer your husband. I am free as the wind. Mrs. L. Porter Hadley is your mother. But she is no longer a relative of mine. To me, she is just an empty old thing who has a summer home and a winter home and two cars and a chauffeur and a dandy little paid-up annuity, and who probably almost had a stroke when Roosevelt cut the value of the dollar to fifty-nine cents."

"Go ahead," Vicky said icily.

"I shall—all night. I am full of beans; my steam is up. Why not? After being married to you for two years and divorced, I found I had failed even to give you one good scolding. Now that there is no sacrament involved, and now that you have turned a night of ambrosia into one of bile, I aim to do a thorough job. I do not think that the mere fact of being a mother to a handsome dame should guarantee one a life of indolence. Do not interrupt to say that your mother's life is full of activity. It isn't. She's fat as a pig, and she loafs till noon, and most of her energetic afternoon perambulations are either to make trouble or to inspect the sites of trouble. I don't think bringing a squalling babe to comely maturity endows a female automatically with superhuman wisdom or inevitable rightness. The feat has been accomplished by some of the dumbest people on earth, by savages, and by hammer murderesses."

FURIOUSLY he puffed his pipe. He wanted to stop, but he was a victim of some possession. "We've quarreled like any two married people in the first hour of what was a pretty exciting association. I do not mind having you know that you excite me. You always did. You rile me. I feel you. I hear, smell, touch, taste, and see you whenever I do any one of those things. I might state in addition that no other woman I have met or tried to meet has ever been able to replace you in my imagination. However, either my taste is reprehensible, or else you have got yourself cluttered up with an unconscionable amount of emotional baggage that's foreign to you. I don't know which. I see that I never shall know. You're still devoted to your mother. And you go off and marry a guy like Bob."

He stopped.

"Well," she said quietly, and trying to hurt him with the question, "since I love Bob also, won't you tell me what's the matter with him?"

"He's perfect!" Raoul said flatly. "At least—he thinks so."

"I thought you liked him."

"I did, fairly well—until he deserted the field in the Grosses car the other day. It opened the door to his machinery. And there he was: a big cog in a small clock."

"He did that," Vicky replied with frigid dignity, "for a reason."

"He knew: to keep from fainting."

"He did it because his business and I mean everything to him. And to be photographed with all those people in that fight would have been dreadfully bad for his business. As a matter of fact, I almost came up the other day to tell you about it, because I knew you would misunderstand."

"Look, Vicky: don't tell me things about Bob. I know about Bob. It isn't cricket to talk about a man behind his back, but we're not playing cricket tonight. And what I think of Bob may help to widen the gap between you and me. He's the model. I'm the bad example. But you seem pretty anxious to know what I think about things, and I'm surer about Bob than most things. His business means everything to him."

"That's what I said."

"All right. Now: Take that away from him—and how happy would you make him? Ask yourself that question every Thursday. It'll keep you humble in so far as Bob's concerned."

"What has that to do with the facts? Nobody's going to take his business away. It's like trying to guess how you'd feel without your right arm."

RAOUL was still truculent. "And a darn good thing to think about! Revealing! Because people do lose their right arms sometimes. All right: I say your Bob is stupid. What would he do if you had come to my cabin with me, and he'd found you gone, and located you there?"

"I don't think I would have gone, anyhow. In fact, I know I wouldn't!"

"I said—if?"

"He would probably have punished me—which I would have deserved—and forgiven me, and forgotten it."

"There, you're wrong again. He has no right to punish you. None. You're a person, not an unhousebroken dog. He can't forgive anything. That is a divine quality. And forget? I can hear that bird reminding you, obliquely, forty years from now."

"You don't know Bob! He's a lot broader than you think."

"Till it hits him—like everyone else. Nope. Your Bob isn't a man. He hasn't feelings. He's a stuffed shirt. Some day, if you ever do happen to have a feeling of your own, you'll find that out. But as long as you keep the trunk locked, Pandora, he'll sit on the lid and kick his heels and play lead soldiers in the belt business and keep you happy. By the way, what kind of belt business is it? I've always wondered? Wheels—or pants?"

"Wheels. Automobile fans. Things like that." Realizing that she had seriously answered a question which, under the circumstances, was ridiculously incongruous, Vicky became even more indignant. "Is ink so much better than belting?"

"Go to bed," Raoul replied firmly.

"I will not!"

"Go back to your husband and leave me to listen to the fish!"

"Sometimes I wonder if you know what you're doing!"

"So do I! Listen, dimness. Do you and Bob get into these marital rows?"

"Certainly not!"

"What do you do, then? Say the multiplication tables?"

Vicky suddenly felt hopeless and worn out. Raoul was being silly again. That meant he had deliberately put himself out of reach. She made one last effort to avenge herself upon him. "I am going to bed. I can't think why I ever came out here! I'm just a sucker, I suppose. When I saw you, I thought maybe something could be done to make you a responsible person. But I guess you just have to be left with your platinum blondes."

"What platinum blondes?"

She laughed sardonically. "What blonde, indeed!"

"Joy?"

"Oh, I think she's lovely and cute and refreshing. But don't ever make the mistake of shaking a Phi Beta Kappa key in her face instead of a bracelet!"

Vicky didn't know exactly what that meant. But she thought it was pretty good. And so, apparently, did Raoul. He pondered the crack humor. He couldn't deny a more than Platonic interest in Juff since he had professed one to cover up Bob. He felt dizzy and a shade crazed.

He was past rational feeling. "I have a right to love! I have a right to razz my mother-in-law. I have a right to berate the ballooning dignity of your spalpeen spouse. I have a right to sing the blues!"

"I saw her coming out of your rooms, the other day." "Trapped, by God! Vicky, you're jealous!"

"Jealous!" The word was not repeated scornfully. There was consternation in Vicky's voice. She was jealous, and she had discovered it. But Raoul must not know. She tried to cover it with a worldly little laugh—something chilling and unconcerned with the cool timbre of, say, a xylophone. She muffed.

She muffed because Raoul knew, and she knew he knew. He said, "Hah!" and he looked reproachfully at such stars as were about. "Isn't that like a woman? Not content with having robbed my life of happiness, not content with a husband who is a veritable oak of society, you want to undermine my pitiful pastimes!"

To his intense alarm, Vicky began to cry. She fumbled in his pocket for a handkerchief. And for perhaps the first time in ten years, he had none. So she was forced to sniffle. He found that tenderness was creeping into his delirium. Something had to be done, something calm and sensible. As a preliminary measure, he picked up the hem of her filmy gown and wiped her eyes with it. He patted her head. "Vicky," he said, "we've got to quit this."

"I know it," she responded.

"It's the weather and the night. We're tired and overwrought."

"Yes."

"You're a married woman."

"I know it."

"And I'm a fool."

She passed that up.

"We're trying," he continued, "to recapture something that doesn't exist, that will never exist again. There's only one thing to do."

"What?"

"As soon as we can, immediately—no, when this trip is over and we get back to Miami and I can do it without making things look peculiar—I'll leave. Get a business call—or something."

"Yes."

"Then you and Bob can finish your vacation in peace."

"I guess so."

"And there won't be any more of this acting like high-school kids."

"All right." She had stopped crying. She put her head on his shoulder. Her voice became controlled again. "That's proper, Raoul. We should have known it from the first. Opening up all those old sore places—couldn't have done anything but hurt."

"So you better go."

"I am going."

"You're not! You're sitting perfectly still."

"I'm tired."

"Of course, you're tired. So am I. Exhausted. Well—good night."

She rose reluctantly. He sat still. "Aren't you going to bed?"

"Certainly not," Raoul replied. "Do you think I can sleep?"

"Well—neither can I. So I might as well stay here. It's—it's cooler."

HE rose and took her arm. He propelled her gently but persistently down the dock. He took her past the main lodge. She didn't say anything, and neither did he. They walked until they were outside the cabin where Bob was sleeping. Then he turned her around so that they faced each other, kissed her, saluted, and hurried rapidly away without making any sound. Vicky stood looking after him and shaking. Finally she opened the screen door. She took off her mules. She tiptoed across the porch and through the living-room into the dark bedroom. She allowed her lacy wrapper to settle on the floor. She crawled between the sheets.

Bob breathed rhythmically.

She turned on one side and then the other. After a long interval she said in a vexed voice: "Bob! Roll over! You're snoring!"

Bob, who had not snored at all, muttered, "Sorry," and stirred obediently.

As for Raoul, he went to his room, undressed, swore, laughed, and set out a pile of magazines to occupy him until it should be breakfast-time. He lighted his pipe fretfully and lay down to read. In three minutes he was asleep. The pipe went out on his pillows after uncoiling a sustained spiral of blue incense.

Chapter Seven



HREE days later, in a pleasant humor, Mr. and Mrs. Hendon were dining together on stone crabs, a delicacy unknown in the north, served in shore dinner resorts in Florida, and surpassing in excellence of flavor all other sea foods. Vicky was wearing a new white dress. Bob was testing out a pair of

doeskin trousers. The weather was superb. Around them, in cream and scarlet profusion, lay the claws of the crabs. They felt happy and somewhat self-congratulatory over their success in behavior at the camp, although their ways of their feelings were different. They were in no mood for shock or surprise.

Vicky, in fact, essayed the subject that obversely gave both of them the most peace. And they were both pleased to know that they could talk about a matter that no longer distressed them.

"When I first saw Raoul," she said, watching her husband closely for any minor signs of disturbance, "I was startled. I didn't want anything to interfere with our vacation. Now—I know nothing will. Nothing can. That's quite a comfort."

Bob nodded calmly, and chewed. Everything was all right. "I might as well admit that it startled me. You know—not that I doubt you at all, ever—but simply that somewhere in a guy's mind he can't help wondering about the other fellow."

"You did wonderfully!" Vicky realized with emotion that Bob *had* done pretty well. By that she really meant that she had contrived to get away with those brief flashes of detection which she had allowed herself. However, she did not analyze the matter that deeply. Here she was, safe in Miami Beach, after that harrowing and unforgettable evening on the dock with Raoul. Safe again, and with a safe future. Since that night, Raoul had been the soul of beautiful withdrawal. In the security that lay ahead she felt justified in dismissing from her mind those past moments when security had dwindled to nil.

Bob looked out of the window of the restaurant and through the palms to the sea. Vicky's compliment pleased him. He had done well. He gave an imaginary point—out of a feeling of assurance that was as false as Vicky's. "I can visualize being damn' jealous of some other sort of guy. But McLiash—"

"He's a love!"

Bob showed a symptom. He choked a little.

She had to patch up that unconscious statement. "So amiable! So easy-going! Fun! But of course you can see why I can't have the slightest real regard for him, couldn't ever respect him?"

He was mollified. "I suppose. Though to agree—is being well-headed, isn't it?"

She smiled her best smile at him. "And why not?"

"Golly!" said Bob. "It's wonderful here! Wonderful food! Wonderful climate! And you—are a wonderful girl!"

"Meaning we're happy."

"Yeah."

"Aren't we!"

They ate. She felt happy. Added to the confidence given to her by her escape, was the continuing presence of Raoul. She would not have admitted that to her inmost self, as she sat with her husband at dinner. But it was there. Raoul had promised to go away. But he had not gone. He showed no signs of going. He would be on the beach in the morning—or maybe even they'd run into him at a night-club somewhere later that evening. He'd be there the day after, and the day after that, swinging a tennis racket, and playing golf, and watching polo-races and riding on his surf-board. Without Raoul, Miami Beach for Vicky would have been much like Cliffmont, New Jersey.

She thought she would add a stone to the neat little grave for memories of Raoul, which she had constructed

to please Bob. "As a matter of fact,—I think I could do with more melted butter,—I'm glad we did see Raoul."

"Me too."

"Just the way you say *you've* always wondered a little—I have. And to meet him and play around with him does a couple of pretty valuable things to me."

"Butter!" Bob said to the waiter.

"It makes every bit of me sure forever that what I used to feel about him is all gone. And at the same time, it makes me stop giving myself a beating for having married him at all. I mean—I can see how any self-respecting girl could have made the same mistake. That's a funny thing to say to the man you love—but can't you understand it?"

He looked at her warmly. Opening her heart up, he thought. He also felt vaguely exasperated, as if he knew subconsciously that this was a game, but he did not allow that to show. "You bet!"

The waiter came back. "Are you Mr. Hendon?" he asked. "Yes. Why?"

"There's a long-distance phone-call relayed here from your hotel."

Bob was on his feet instantly, his face contracted. He followed the waiter to the phone. Vicky waited, as all wives must, guessing anxiously.

BOB, returning, was no longer the white-clad idler.

His face was hard and his stride powerful. His eyes scarcely saw Vicky any more—when so recently they had seemed to observe nothing else. He sat hard in his chair and said nothing in answer to her pleading stare—a manner calculated to cause her the suffering of suspense and thus compensate for some inner trouble of his own.

"Bob! What's wrong! Is Mother—"

"No. No, it's the factory. A strike!"

"A strike!"

He banged down his fist. "A strike. That was Jones! They walked out this afternoon!"

"What's wrong?"

"Plenty! They want a union. They want a raise. They want shorter hours. I thought we had that all out last year. The depression—"

"What did you tell him to do?"

He looked at her in surprise. "Tell Jones? This isn't anything for Jones to handle! I told him I'd be there in the morning!"

"In the morning!"

"We'll have our baggage sent on later. By God, I'll see those birds—"

Vicky felt sick. They were going! Suddenly. Out of this paradise. Away—from Raoul. Bob and his business would snatch them back, and set them again into the orderly grooves that had been made for Bob and his business. It wasn't fair. She wouldn't do it. But she was hopeless at first. Refusal to accompany Bob would only infuriate him. He was already raging. Guile would be necessary if she were to finish to whatever end was implicit the anonymous dreams that Miami had brought into her head.

Bob ignored her. He stuffed a chunk of bread into his mouth. He talked through it. "Men like myself are fighting for America now with our backs to the wall! We're fighting for freedom to run our own businesses! We're fighting against regimentation! We're fighting for the right of the pioneer! We made business, and we're battling to keep it! I tell you—say! I wonder when the plane leaves?"

"Plane?" she echoed.

"Plane. Hey! Waiter! Check. Coffee and check!"

"But—"

He left the table. He went to the phone. He came back in a moment. "I got two seats, by luck. And we still have a couple of hours. Time to finish our coffee and whatnot."

"How long will it take you to settle the strike?"

He was grim and fierce. "About two hours, if they wise up. But how can anyone tell?"

She had marshaled a few objections. She said: "Bobby, why can't I wait here? You know, if you go up there and get all full of fight, you won't come back and finish your vacation. Not unless I'm here. Then—you'll have to come back."

He made what was undisguisedly a forced smile. "You tag along with me: I need you."

"But I can't stand planes. I'd have to take a train, anyhow."

"I thought you and McLiesh were always riding everywhere in planes?"

She looked earnestly at her husband. "We were. But that's just the sort of thing I always hated. Planes make me sick, and jittery."

"It's only a few hours."

She shook her head. She was not quite as serious as she had been. "No sir! I stay here. Not at the hotel. I'll move over to the Grosses'. They'd love it. They can look after me. Then if you do get finished up in a few days, you can come back."

"I told Weston last year that this would come! I'll bet they have a war-chest—"

"And if you can't come back, just call me, and I'll hop the first train."

"The ungratefulness of it! I treat those men like pals. And they treat me—"

"That'll save me going on a plane."

"Where would they be?"—his voice attracted attention from all over the restaurant,—"where would they be if I hadn't built up that business? That's what I'd like to know!"

Vicky tried a subtler and more dangerous card. "Or are you afraid to let me stay down here as a hostage to coming back yourself—because of Raoul?"

"What?"

She had his attention. "I said: 'Are you jealous of Raoul? Is that why you want to rush me away tonight?'"

He saw her for a moment and then looked back into his wrath. "Of McLiesh? Good Lord! Nonsense! Stay down if you like."

Vicky's cheeks were crimson. Her eyes were bright. She was trembling. He did not notice it. If he had, he would have attributed it to a wifely sharing of his own righteous indignation.

"Here's the coffee, dear," she said, as if solicitude for him were all that mattered to her in the world. . . .

Bob, with an overcoat over his arm, wearing a blue business suit, and accompanied by a vibrant, adherent Vicky, leaned over the desk at the air terminal. "All the way," he said.

"Your weight?" the clerk asked.

"A hundred and seventy-four."

Outside, on the field, a motor throbbed and was still.

Bob picked up his ticket and turned to Herbie. "Sorry to be tearing away like this."

Herbie smiled—as always, sardonically, benignly—one could not be sure. "Don't be too hard on your workmen."

Vicky sprang to the defense. "You professionals don't know what men like Bob are up against."

Bob started toward the gangway that led from the building to the gleaming side of the plane. A grim man. Vicky clung to him with an elation hidden neither from Marcia nor her husband.

"Well," said Bob.

She lifted her face. "Good-by, darling. And hurry back!"

He kissed her. "Be good!"

"All aboard!"

AT this moment Raoul hurried up, panting. "Bob, old man! This is terrible!"

Bob glanced at him. "I'll make it O.K." He smiled tightly. "Take care of Vicky."

"We will," Marcia said.

Raoul held out a square package. "A little nutriment," "Can't, old man—extra weight."

"I just fixed it up at the desk."

Bob took the package reluctantly. He moved along the companionway. He seemed almost not to have noticed that Raoul was there—or even Vicky, for that matter. And such was the case: His business was threatened; the central theme of his life was in danger of disruption; the very heart of all that was Robert Hendon had been struck. Beside the engraving and yet numbing force of that blow, a wife, friends, a light rival, had no importance. Herbie and Marcia and Raoul seemed to feel that. Vicky did not.

She kissed him again.

He went up the little staircase, carrying Raoul's gift. He waved unseeing and ducked inside the plane. A moment later the door slammed. Propellers thwacked the air. The ship moved clumsily over across the field, paused, turned, churned up a cloud of dust in a fixed experiment with power, and ran out into the night.

Four people walked back into the parking-yard, slowly, as people always do after a sudden departure. The coming and going of man through the sky has intensified that suddenness to a stupefying thing. Marcia looked at Raoul. He seemed pleased by the Fates.

Vicky had not yet dared to look at him. She felt as if Bob might still be watching from his ship. She felt, suddenly, guilty and afraid. Then she heard his familiar voice in his familiar mood of mischief. "Good heavens!"

"What?" asked Marcia.

"I had a fellow drive me out here hell-bent, but I forgot to tell him he was to drive me back. He's probably gone."

"You're an ass," Marcia said.

"All the worse for you, because I've got to ride with you."

"How did you know Bob was leaving?" Vicky said as they sat down in the Grosses' car.

"The MacTavish."

"You comic valet? And how did he know?"

"The MacTavish is not comic. He is a great man. He will go far. As to how he knew, I have not yet ascertained. He probably saw your baggage in the foyer, or something astute like that."

They were moving away from the air-field. "I phoned him," Marcia said dryly.

"Thanks," Raoul replied.

THEY settled back for the ride through Miami and across the causeway. They were quiet for an interval, seemingly resting from much emotion and thought.

"Anyway," Vicky said at last, "it was nice of you to bring Bob some fruit."

"It wasn't fruit."

"Candy? Bob hates candy!"

"It wasn't candy."

"Then—what was it?"

"Euphrosyne."

"Euphrosyne?"

"The raccoon Bob sent me on the night we met."

"Raccoon!"

Raoul nodded. Marcia and Herbie looked out their separate windows. "Raccoon. A rather pointed gift, I thought at the time. I assumed Bob had sent me a mascot to take your place, Vicky. I approved of the gesture at the time, though I must say he hasn't made any of equal subtlety since then."

"He was just tight! We saw an old man with it, and he had it sent to you for a laugh."

"Oh?" Raoul mused. "Then he won't understand that I have lent him Euphrosyne to take your place with him—since he's now a widower."

"Raoul!"

"Yes?"

"Suppose he opens the package on the plane?"

"That—was the idea. Euphrosyne has been living in the hotel basement for some time. The MacTavish is a raccoon expert, but he couldn't allay a certain characteristic raccoon odor. So we moved her. She was bored. I thought that when Bob heard her scratch and opened the box, she would leap out in the plane. She leaps rather amazingly. Then, as I construct the scene, there will be a contretemps. Pilots and co-pilots hopping about. Stewardesses climbing the window-curtains. Passengers rushing to or from the raccoon, according to their essential tropisms. The plane losing altitude. The very thing to put a bit of heaven in the hours of a man rushing toward an industrial crisis."

Vicky let him finish. She seethed. She had stayed in Miami for him. For a fool! She had let her husband go into a difficult and perhaps perilous struggle, because she wanted to be with a nitwit! She drew in her breath audibly. "I suppose it never occurred to you that Bob was in a pretty serious mood?"

"Not till I saw him."

"Or that he wouldn't appreciate having to deal with a raccoon at a time when he wants to think and plan?"

"No. Frankly, I'd imagined Bob would be delighted to see Euphrosyne again. After all, he gave her to me at a time when I was in something of a mood myself."

"You never really considered what a strike means?"

"Indeed I did! We had one in the home factory. I settled it myself. I rushed home. I called a meeting. I got up on the platform. I said: 'Boys, my family has stuck

so and so much dough in this thing. We're taking out so and so much—which I am squandering for the most part. All right. I am willing to take a cut and give you more. But I also want you boys to economize, increase sales, and speed up production.' Words to that effect. The strike was over in no time. The men got a raise. It did have a bad effect on Hickel, I recall. After my speech he went to a sanitarium for seven weeks. The only casualty."

"And that's your idea of fighting?"

"Fighting? Who said anything about fighting? Labor isn't chemical warfare. It's people. Don't bite the hand that feeds you. It seemed to me that your Bob was altogether too much on the acid side."

Vicky was silent. No use talking to Raoul, ever, when he was being outrageous. And he was generally outrageous. Once again she felt the cleavage in ideas and feelings between him and herself. Once again she felt allied to Bob. Her fury had subsided to a bleak despair, a chilly anger, and a hopeless disappointment.

What Raoul had meant was clear enough to Herbie and Marcia. They interpreted his own story of his own strike correctly. They understood that when he was most in earnest, he was most likely to seem casual and jesting. Raoul loved people and sympathized with them. But Bob didn't even have a glimmering of what people were. He regarded them as commodities.

Herbie expressed that difference later that evening to his wife. "It's peculiar," he said, "that a guy like Bob, who came up through the ranks, could forget so much of his own trials and those of his companions. And funnier still that Raoul, born with the silver spoon, can make a brother out of a doorman and a buddy out of a porter."

To which Marcia replied, with what was for her deep vision: "We have something terribly wrong going on in the little red schoolhouse. Did you ever make a comparative analysis of industrial giants? About half of those who began at the bottom trample their way to the top. The other half rise by coöperation. It's the same with the men who inherit. Half of them are domineering jackals, and the rest gentlemen. The communists ought to think that over. It's not where you begin, even in the race for dollars, but what you are."

But Vicky made no such research into human nature. She sat elbow to elbow with Raoul and felt a million miles away. When they drove into the Grosses' yard, she excused herself. She was, she said, very tired. She went to the room Marcia had given her.

RAOUL, discomfited and a little ashamed of himself, talked to the Grosses only long enough to be polite. He walked back to his hotel—along the beach part of the way. He entered his suite by the bedroom door. The MacTavish hurried to his aid.

"I didn't expect you in so soon, sir."

"And I expected you would be out gambling and entertaining mysterious Russian countesses. I want a dressing-gown, the MacTavish. Slippers. I am going to sulk."

"Anything wrong, sir?"

"Euphrosyne was a mistake."

"I feared it."

"So did I. I expected it would be a mistake for Mr. Hendon. He isn't exactly an animal-lover."

"But Mrs. Hendon—"

Raoul sighed. "Found it unseemly. Anything new?"

"Two persons were here to see you."

"Persons?"

"Spaniards, I imagine."

Raoul stared. "Not Jimenez Portuero and Hernando Diatsa?"

"They didn't leave their names, sir. One was very fat and dark. The other tall. With mustaches."

"Jimenez and Hernando! A close thing, the MacTavish! I got out of Uruguay in the nick of time to save myself from those two men."

"They said they would call again."

"No doubt."

"They're stopping at the Surf-Miami Hotel. What measures shall I adopt with them?"

Raoul lighted a cigarette and walked around the room. "We'll wait until the crisis occurs. Then we'll be astute and ingenious—escape in false whiskers, probably." As he spoke, he was peering into the living-room.

His inspection brought a flush on the MacTavish's pallid face. "I—was studying."

Raoul walked through the door. All around the room, pinned on draperies, hung over pictures, and stuck with labels to the window blinds, were charts and diagrams. On the desk was an array of bottles of what he thought were paints. "Art, the MacTavish?"

"No sir. No sir. If I had expected you, I would never have allowed this litter—"

Raoul picked up one of the bottles. A small label on its back read, "*Property of the Laboratories of the Mc-Liesh Ink Corp.*" He turned to his valet.

THE MacTavish was perspiring. "I'm afraid I've taken considerable liberty, sir. I sent for this material under your name."

"But—what is it?"

"Ink. Your sales-charts. Advertising surveys. I'm not much of a chemist—I only took four courses; but I'm learning rapidly. Of course, I was familiar with ordinary ink formula—Chinese gall with green vitriol, and so on."

Raoul was still baffled. "I gather you are studying the ink industry. But why, the MacTavish?"

The young man wrinkled his hands miserably. "It is presumptuous. I am aware of that. But I have heard you say frequently that you had no technical knowledge of your business, and inasmuch as I am in your service, I thought an occasion might arise when such facts, as I might be able to learn would prove useful. Hence—"

Raoul fiddled with the bright bottles. He was overwhelmed. The poor, scrawny, verbose, loyal nut! "Would you like to get a start in the ink business, the MacTavish?" he asked quietly.

The young man's face brightened, and then darkened in alternation of emotions Raoul could not read. "Not at present, sir. It is—unbelievably kind of you. I appreciate it. But for the moment—"

"Don't get the idea, the MacTavish, that you aren't one valet in a billion. I'd rather part with my right arm, my college diploma, and those water-wings you gave me—"

"Thank you, sir."

"But if you ever change your mind, if you ever want a career in inks—"

"Yes sir."

Raoul began to grin. "Oh—say?"

"Yes sir?"

"In all your erudition—"

"A small fragment of human knowledge, sir. The result of correspondence courses and night study. Hazard—"

"But vast. What I want to know is, have you any information on cephalopods?"

"Virtually none, sir."

"Good!"

The MacTavish seemed nettled. "Yes sir."

"Cigarette?"

"I do not smoke, sir. It's just the waste of time, for as the nicotine—"

Raoul sat down on a divan and spoke gravely. "Mac, I want you never to learn anything about cephalopods."

"I shall abhor them."

"Like the plague. When you happen to overhear a conversation about cephalopods—stop your ears. Run. Do you understand?"

"Perfectly, sir. I am to avoid even the inadvertent accumulation of data relative to cephalopods."

"Precisely."

"May I ask why, sir?"

Raoul studied the tip of his cigarette. "Because I know a lot about cephalopods. I studied them in college for a whole semester. My brain is crammed with facts about them. I want it to stand forever as a thing I know—and a thing you do not know. Without some such private superiority, Mac, sooner or later, I'd have to valet you."

There was the faintest of gleams in both of the MacTavish's divergent eyes. "I see, sir."

"And you are prepared to assure me that your present knowledge of the class is nil?"

The gleam was a shade less faint—a bare shade. "Practically. I have, of course, a casual understanding of that division of the phylum Mollusca. The octopuses, squids, cuttlefish—"

Raoul jumped from his seat. "And the nautilus?" he thundered. "You forgot them!"

"So I did, sir."

Raoul sank back with a beatific smile. "An ignorant oversight, the MacTavish. You know almost nothing of the cephalopods!"

The telephone rang.

The MacTavish answered. "It's Mrs. Hendon," he said. "I'll take it in the bedroom."

"Hello, Vicky."

"Hello, Raoul." She paused. "Raoul?"

"Yes?"

"I'm sorry I was so mean about the raccoon."

"I'm sorry I was so foolish."

"Then you'll forgive me?"

"Absolutely. Pinheaded thing to do—give a guy as worried as Bob a booby trap."

Another pause.

"Were you asleep?"

He sat down on the bed. "No."

"What were you doing?"

"Discussing marine invertebrates with the MacTavish."

"Is—anybody with you?"

He grinned at his reflection in the bureau mirror. "Such as Joy?"

"Or shouldn't I ask?"

"Nobody is here, Vicky. I'm alone. As usual. I came home along the ocean, moodily. I was thinking of you. I was thinking that we never did and never could see eye to eye."

"Oh."

"Well—it was sweet of you to call up."

"Raoul?"

"Yes?"

"I was thinking too. You know—Bob wanted me to go home with him. I didn't want to go. Because of you."

HE took a package of cigarettes from his dressing-gown pocket and put one into his mouth. He sat on the flap of a booklet of matches, managing thus to get a light. He settled in the pillows. Vicky's voice was low and tantalizingly intimate. It was going to be a long conversation. He knew that she also was sitting in bed in the Grosses' house. She admitted that she had stayed in Miami because of him, and Raoul blew smoke into the air before he spoke.

"I know it, Vicky."

"Is it dreadfully disloyal?"

"That—I don't know."

"If you were some other man—" Her voice dwindled away.

"If I were—then what?"

"Well—I wouldn't feel so dishonest. I'd think it was cheating, and that cheating wasn't so terrible these days."

"Fun," he said in a meditative, dissatisfied tone.

"Look. Will you just not be mad at me?"

"Absolutely not."

"And not think I'm chicken-headed?"

He chuckled. "But I do think that, Vicky."

"Oh—I know it. And so do I. But will you come to see me?"

He replied softly, "Why the devil do you think I stuck around Miami too, after swearing I'd leave?"

"And swim?"

"And ride horses up the beach. And go to jai-alai games. Sure, Vicky."

"Couldn't we—" Her last words were so soft that he missed them.

"Can't hear."

"I'm lonely, Raoul!" she said vehemently, and after a moment.

"Who isn't in this world?"

"What I said was—couldn't we pretend, just because we are lonely, and just because this is 1936 and not 1880—just for romance and old times' sake—that you and I were married again, and—"

"Nix."

"Nix, Raoul?"

"Nix. If you were any other man's wife, even; but—"

"I know. But you'll see me?"

"Sure, you idiot! I'll hang around like a sick dog, morning, noon and night! And now go to sleep! Three more sentences like those last ones, and I'll come over and break into the Grosses' house."

"Will you?" She laughed.

"Good night!"

He hung up gently.



LIKE a sick dog, he had said.
He stood on a grandstand seat.
"Come on, Number Eight!" he bellowed.
"Run, you fool!"

Out, beyond the sloping bouchs of faces, in an ocean of light, ten greyhounds ran madly on a dirt track. Ahead of them an electric rabbit raced along a steel rail, spitting sparks. The crowd bellowed. The dogs barked. The white rabbit maintained its mechanical lead.

"He's out in front!" Vicky shouted. She grabbed Raoul's coat-tails and pulled herself up on another seat.

"Come on, you fool!" Raoul hollered.

"Run!" Vicky screamed.

He grabbed his hat and began to fan the air. Number Eight, a fawn-colored whippet, made the turn and came into the straightaway like a deer. Nose out, tail stiff, legs bounding, he passed the main body of his competitors. He cut in to the rail. Only two dogs were ahead. He seemed to see the rabbit more clearly, for he put on an extra burst of speed. He was leading.

Vicky hammered Raoul's back hysterically. "Come in, long shot! Oh! Run! Run! Run, you!"

Number Eight led by a length. . . . Two. . . . Five. A sure winner.

Raoul stuck his fingers in his mouth and blew a shrill blast. The ear-splitting sound was lost in the general pandemonium.

Number Eight had the race in the bag. And then Number Eight suffered some unknowable stimulus, some lapse in dog psychology. He decided, as he ran, to give a glance at the crowd. Maybe he was sure of victory that he felt entitled to a bit of grandstand play. In any event, with the finish line in sight and the pack trailing, he turned his mournful face toward the spectators. The sight of so many people held him. Maybe the brass instruments in the band were even more to blame, or perhaps a moth flying unnoticed save by Number Eight. Whatever it was, fascination seized him. He forgot the rabbit. He forgot the advice of his mother when he was a pup to keep his head down, his eye on the bunny, and to go out there and win.

His splendid pace faltered. He stumbled on his own feet. The pack caught up with him and flashed past him. As it went by, a stunning avalanche of racing beauty, he barked irritably. Perhaps some great piece of dog-thinking had been interrupted.

Number Five was first. Three placed. Two showed.

Number Eight came trotting in, long after the race was ended—last, a very bad last, still staring at the grandstand, oblivious of defeat and heedless of the laughter showered down upon him. A great thinker, perhaps, but a poor racer.

Raoul slammed his hat onto the cement floor of the stadium and sat down with Vicky. They laughed until they were too weak to talk, too weak to move.

When the odds paid by the winners were flashed upon the indicator in electric lights, when the band played, and when the loud-speakers announced that the pari-mutuel machines were open for bets on the next race, they were still laughing.

Fun, she said.

"You blow in here," the music played.
They danced. Raoul held her in his arms and ached with an isolation he had not known before.

Distance does not lend enchantment to that which is really enchanting. Distance is analgesic. It is soothing. In the years they had been separated, Vicky had not seemed so ecstatic, so ineluctable, so necessary. It was just Miami and the night, he said to himself.

And when that did no good, he said it was merely that she was so familiar. He told himself that a strange woman is alarming—you do not know what she will like and what will displease her; while a familiar woman is felicitous because you know upon which keys of her nature to play. And Vicky was terrifyingly familiar—the way she lifted her eyes, the perfume she used, the top of her head, the tangibility of Vicky dancing. Old and lovely preludes, old raptures, things gone.

"Raoul," she murmured.

"Present!"

"Remember the night in Marseilles?"

"No fair!"

"The tremendous room that looked down the stairway over the city to the Sacré Cœur?"

"And you hid under the bed when I went down to buy flowers?"

She giggled. "And you thought I was mad and had run away."

"And you thought I'd gone to buy a ticket to Paris—not a bouquet?"

"And we laughed so hard we woke up the English colonel?"

"And he came over in a nightcap and drank seven Scotches and sodas—"

"And talked about India—"

"Wasn't he a bore! I thought he'd never leave. And you sitting there looking like an orchid all the time."

"I loved him!"

"And he didn't make you the least tiny bit impatient?"

Her eyes came up to his. "Well—a little, Raoul."

Fun. . . .

Two rode water-bicycles up the canal the next morning. Two long pontoons with a big paddle-wheel behind them, geared to pedals, and a comfortable seat. The whole machine painted red, so that it looked like an aquatic chariot of swift and fantastic substance. Actually they made slow progress.

Side by side they floated across the lagoon and on toward the Grosses' house—Vicky in shorts, with a metal band around her hair. They pedaled under hanging palms, and past green lawns with sloops and cruisers tied up at their edges. They went beneath a lofty white bridge. They talked about what a swell person Marcia was, and how a bridge hand should have been played, and how long alligators lived—although there was no 'gators in the canal, only mullet which sprang from the water ahead of them in silver schools.

On a bulkheaded empty lot they saw a small negro boy fishing. He had a cane pole and a bleached line, and his posture and mien were of an unutterable hopelessness. They propelled themselves up to him and rested. He regarded them apathetically.

"Jonathan," said Raoul, "how is your luck?"

"Name of Hannibal," the ebony youngster replied.

"Well—Hannibal, then, any luck?"

"No suh."

"That's bad."

"Yes suh. No luck. Only mullet swimmin' by. Ah fished hyeah yestahday. An' the day befoah. They aint no fish, thassall."

RAOUL moved in closer. He put his arm out on the wall to hold himself against the tidal current. At the same time, he surreptitiously hooked the boy's line around his toe and began to pull it up.

"What are you fishing for?" Vicky asked.

"Anythin'. Grunts, most likely. Somethin' for to eat with the grits."

"And what do you use for bait?"

"Usin' shoe-leather."

"Shoe-leather!"

The youngster nodded solemnly. "Aint got no pork home. Cain't buy no shrimp. Usin' leather. Ah pulled a little chunk off my shoe."

"Good heavens!" Vicky said softly.

Raoul was monkeying with his own foot. Presently there was a soft splash. The boy's sinker had been in and out of the water without his knowledge.

"Thought Ah was a-goin' to buy some bait, today," the boy said, his dark eyes glancing amusedly at Raoul and then off to the hot blue of the sky. "Ah seen two milk-bottles on a step, an' Ah surrounded 'em—but they wa'n't the kin' you get nickels foah."

Raoul reached out and tugged the boy's line. Instantly thereafter he stared skyward, his face innocent.

The reaction was quick. Hannibal yanked his rod. "Man! Somethin' sure hit it! Somethin' aftah that ole leather!"

"Really?" Raoul said.

"Gone, now, though—"

"Maybe it took your bait."

"I don't recollect—"

Lazily the boy pulled up his sinker and hook. His eyes bulged. His voice was a tremulous whisper. "Look! Look what Ah done hook up!" He stared glassily at Vicky.

"White lady—you brung me luck."

Impaled on his hook, dripping, was a dollar bill.

Vicky gazed at Raoul.

"Nice going, Hannibal," he said.

They pushed on.

That night they took a ride in the blimp that cruises perpetually in the Miami sky. The motors made a heady noise and it was difficult to talk. The helium-filled bag overhead dipped and rose in the warm air currents.

"It's scary," Vicky said in his ear.

"You wanted to do something different."

She put her head close to his and nodded. He could feel her agreement in the touch of her hair. It was easier and more significant than shouting. Too significant. He pointed out the window.

THEY looked into the lush nothing upon which they floated: Overhead, ragged Caribbean clouds arranged themselves in artificial perfection against the stars. Below was Miami—a figure of white light lying beside the sea, with an anatomy of arteries and veins marked by blue and rash-red neon. Across the dark throat of the bay were strings of beads—three causeways set glittering by the lamps of myriad automobiles. Skyscrapers reached up toward the ship. The maze of vari-colored bulbs over Biscayne Park spread a cobweb in the palms—red, green and amber. Boats rode the canals and lagoons like fireflies. At some measureless distance a lighthouse flared and dimmed away in the everlasting circuit of its bright tocsin. But closer by were streets suffused with store-front light, where miniature trolley cars and busses crept and people walked. Those streets led away to the Everglades and the sea; and ultimately became the blackness of the abysmal swamp or the still more abysmal ocean.

"It makes you think how wonderful people are," she said.

He shook his head in repudiation. "An accident. Lots of man's accidents are extraordinary. But Miami wasn't built as blimp scenery."

"Are you going to be stubbornly realistic like this all evening?"

"Nobody ever accused me of realism before."

"I don't like it. I'm in a giddy mood. High-up, and mesmerized."

He peered at the Magic City—a city which for once looked magical indeed. "A fellow can't bellow sweet nothings!"

"I believe that's why you brought me here!"

He did not answer.

"Raoul! Hold my hand."

"Nix. If you want me to hold your hand, you'll have to get a telegram from Bob instructing me—which hand, how long I hold it. Wrist-stroking privilege: Answer yes or no."

"Let's land."

"That's a good idea. I'm hungry!"

An hour later they drove into the Grosses' garage. Marcia and Herbie had gone to bed. The lights downstairs were low. Vicky led him to the porch that faced the patio. She sat in a divan, and he reluctantly sat beside her. The scent of flowers filled his nostrils. They smoked cigarettes. Vicky made two highballs. She touched his hand. And suddenly, he knew he couldn't carry on. She didn't want him to. Bob was far, far away.

"Of all the men I know," she whispered, "you're the last one of whom I'd have expected such chivalry. And—daring, I'm sick of it."

The hammers played the dominant monody of the darkness upon his temples. He had a moment of grace. Then he knew—it would be too late. Done. The proud dominion of himself would be thrown away for unknown hazards—humiliation, despair, sorrow. But it was too late.

Then the phone rang.

"Damn!" she said.

She answered it and came back. "It's for you."

"For me! Nobody knows where I am!"

"Somebody does," she replied unhappily. "Your abominable valet."

Raoul was up in an instant. He knew the MacTavish. This call meant something serious. His voice was urgent. "Yes, Mac?"

The indolence of his valet's near whisper was excitement itself. "I'm in the booth in the lobby, sir. I only have a second. The two men are here!"

"What two men?"

"Your foes. Here's my scheme!" The MacTavish hatched his plot quickly. "They're in your suite—"

"But—what foes?"

"The Uruguayans!"

"¿Tínez? ¿Hernandos? ¿What—?"

"I have offered to serve them a drink. I am—ostensibly—getting ice. I can easily put in each drink a strong sedative. Say, six grains of a barbituate. Nothing lethal. When they are unconscious—I can arrange something. A freighter heading toward South America would be best, I believe—or a chartered plane."

Raoul put his tongue in his cheek. He cleared his throat. His eyebrows were lifted. His face, indeed, wore an astonishing expression. "The MacTavish," he said softly, "that's fine. Able! But I gave you a wrong steer."

"Wrong steer, sir?"

"Nothing intentional. It's this way." He gulped.

"Those men are officials in the city of Montevideo."

"Officials. So I presumed—police—"

"Not police. I gave the city a hospital, the MacTavish. Thought they could use another one. And those birds have come all the way up here to give me the local legion of honor and kiss me on both cheeks. I can't stand being kissed on both cheeks, Mac. Phobia. My father had it before me. That's why I ducked out of Uruguay as I did. They were getting up a charivari in the public square for me so—"

"Oh," said the MacTavish.

"No Mickey Finns, then, Mac!"

"No, sir."

"The best Scotch."

"Exactly, sir."

"And I'll be along soon. Might as well get it over with. Better be kissed in my own rooms than in the Montevideo marketplace."

"Certainly, sir. And"—the MacTavish stuttered—"I'm sorry, sir. Inexpressibly embarrassed."

"Don't be, Mac. It was a lulu! And—in times past, I have had trouble with the police, occasionally. I remember doing a bunk from Constantinople under considerable pressure. I appreciate your solicitude. Barbituates and a freighter, eh? Really worthy of you, Mac!"

"Thank you, sir."

He returned to the porch. "What on earth were you talking about?"

"I've got to go."

"Oh, Raoul—you mustn't!"

"Yeah. Got to see a couple of men about—"

"All right."

"Angry?"

"No."

"Meaning yes?"

She laughed a little. "Change it to yes—meaning no."

"That's better. Good night, Vicky."

"Good night, Raoul." She followed him to the door.

There was an orange light burning mistily in the hall. She held out her hand. "It isn't—Joy, is it?"

"What would you say if it were?"

She looked at him—raised her eyes. They filled. "Nothing," she answered softly. "Nothing at all, Raoul."

Chapter Nine



He awoke next morning after a night of troubled dreaming—dreaming very easy to read. He had dreamed that Vicky was standing on the observation platform of a train running away from him, and that he had chased it down the tracks, mile after mile, while she threw kisses, and the distance between them increased in spite of his most vehement efforts. He had dreamed that he had been hunting bear, and suddenly a monstrous grizzly had stood up in front of him, growling, and with a face that looked like Bob's.

His head ached, and he was depressed. Our dreams cling to us when we wake, like smoke-wraiths; and sometimes in a whole day we cannot dissipate them. He did not recall his pursuit of Vicky or his fear of Bob in his dreams. He did not even realize that he was depressed. For he remembered only a funnier dream, of the two sanctionious politicians who had waited upon him the previous evening—one fat, one tall, like comedians; and they made the pat, enthusiastic speeches they had made on the night before, and then they danced in fiestas and he walked in Montevideo, and afterward was smothered in blueprints of the

hospital for which he had made the initial and major contribution.

He was moody and directionless. He reached up over his bed and turned on the radio. A taffy-voiced moron sang "Moon over Miami," and that brought the MacTavish with a tray of orange juice and coffee and toast. The MacTavish also seemed jittery.

"A fine day, sir," he said.

"Copyright by the Miami Chamber of Commerce."

"You will swim this morning?"

"What have we on the docket?"

"I believe you said Mrs. Hendon would be at your cabaña at eleven?"

"The ineffable Vicky! Yes. What's news, Mac?"

"A marlin was taken yesterday, sir. First of the year. The Italian campaign is meeting with some resistance. More from nature than from Haile Selassie. There was a dispute over the Mongolian border between the Russians and the Japanese—"

Raoul bit into his toast. "*O tempora*—what? War, war, war!"

"Do you wish me to have a suitable mount made for the token left by the Uruguayan gentlemen last night?"

Raoul yawned and tied the belt of his dressing-gown in a bow. "The key to Montevideo?" He yawned and shook his head. "Nope. Not that—or the plaque. Just file it under: '*Cities: Keys to*.'"

"Yes sir."

"Moon over Miami—" the fool sang.

An hour later Raoul lay in a beach-chair with his eyes closed. He was waiting for Vicky. He looked as if he were asleep. But he was burning.

So was Vicky. She had not yet left the Grosses' house. She sat in front of a vanity, looking at herself. She had tried on three different dresses and was still dissatisfied. She ran a comb through her hair again, and whispered, "Damn!" and mussed her careful coiffure with both hands.

Marcia knocked.

"Come in."

"Good morning, Vicky."

"Hello!"

"What's the matter?"

Vicky sighed. "I don't know. I feel like crying. I feel like a baby. I don't know what the matter with me is."

Marcia took a cigarette and sat on the bed. "A mnemonic spasm."

"A what?"

"A yen."

"I know it."

"Why don't you fly to Havana with Raoul and purge yourself, and get into a quarrel with him, and then go back to Cliffmont? It's really the only antidote we have."

"I can't."

"Herbie could lend you the fare."

"Don't tease me."

"Why not?"

"I don't know what to do!"

"You mean, you know what to do and you haven't got the nerve. Ah, God! You adolescents." Marcia looked at the heap of dresses. "And all you need is a bathing suit and a smile! Women! Don't you sometimes get sick of physical female apparatus? Of just being a woman?"

"Sure."

"And I suppose men get weary the same way. Well—"

"Don't go! Tell me what to do!"

"I will not! I like you. I don't want to lose a beautiful friendship. Why don't you go back to Bob?"

Vicky immediately looked at her wrist-watch. "Good heavens! It's eleven-fifteen! I've got to run!"

So she put on any dress, and combed her hair any way, and ran.

When she walked up to the swimming-pool deck, she was calm—indolent, almost bored. Outwardly.

He opened his eyes and smiled in a leisurely manner. He rose. "Vicky! Hello. You look charming, as always."

"Been in?"

"Not yet."

She didn't want to swim at all. "I'll be ready in a jiffy!" she said.

They dived and swam and went down on the beach and poured sand on each other. They paddled Raoul's surfboard out beyond the life-lines, and she tried to ride it in

and fell off, and he took a turn and came ashore on a long wave, standing straight, with his arms out, smiling, tan, magnificent—and filled with a cold hopelessness.

They went back to the shaded porch of his cabaña afterward. Kids were sailing toy boats in the shallow end of the pool. Two young men were arching into the air from the high board, turning, falling breath-takingly. Fat women swam with the skirts of their bathing suits ballooning on the surface behind them. An orchestra began to play the song the idiot had sung when Raoul woke, and the other perpetual-motion song about the music and round and round. Two army airplanes thundered overhead.

They had their table put around a corner where the breeze came unadulterated from the Bahamas and the West Indies, loaded with sea-spice and not entirely rid of voodoo drums and the love-philter of gumbo-limbo trees.

"I'd like a drink," Vicky said.

"Sun's not over the yardarm."

"Nevertheless—"

"Waiter! A daiquiri? Two daiquiris!"

Two. . . And two more.

He felt less remote, less chilly. The sun on his shoulders no longer touched only his skin. "You know," he said, "it wasn't Joy—last night."

"I know."

He told her about the Uruguayans. They laughed.

"But what on earth prompted you to give a hospital to those people?"

"They needed the kind I gave—badly."

"Raoul! You're a lunatic."

"Shall we debate it? I do business down there. We've made money out of that town. A nice place, by the way. You'd like it."

"Why didn't you say that in the first place?"

"One never says the shabby things first."

"It isn't shabby! It's nice."

"And I say it's shabby. Capitalist paternalism! No more, no less. Heigh-ho. Vicky, let's have a third libation. We will then be tight. My soul is like concrete this morning."

He called the waiter. And afterward they had a fourth drink, and they forgot about lunch, and reminisced, and it was three o'clock when they began on cold tongue and salad. But they didn't care.

"Let's get dressed and go rolling about in one of those baby-carriages," he said.

IT was four o'clock; they were rolling along the boardwalk, her hand in his. "The yardarm," he cried.

"How remiss!" she said.

The colored boy rolled them on, to an outdoor café, where they parked under a gold-and-purple parasol.

"What shall we do tonight?" he asked her.

She looked at him without speaking.

"Tonight's going to be bad," he said lightly. "How's Bob?"

"Fine."

"You've heard, then?"

"Daily."

He smiled. "And you write daily?"

"I—try to."

"Shall we proceed? I suggest that we make a tour of the whole boardwalk. A drink in every one of those lotos gardens."

Vicky waved the boy to carry on.

The next place was Hawaiian, with a bamboo fence around it, and music and a dancing girl.

"Tight?" she asked.

"Not a bit!"

"You never really get tight! That's the trouble with you! You drink too much, but you don't ever behave badly. Now, people like Bob—"

She shrugged. "I can't stop talking about him, can I?"

"People like Bob—what?"

"They seldom drink. When they do, they get cock-eyed."

I don't know which is worse."

He dismissed the boy and the rolling chair and took her walking. They were in the same mood, in actuality. They invented things to do as the things they were doing palled. They were staying out-doors, mingling with people, but remaining aloof from them because they did not want to be alone together. That possibility was painful. So they maintained a hand-holding companionship, with the whole world for their chaperon.

At six o'clock they found themselves sitting on the sand in front of a palm grove which temporarily occupied an unsold building-site. A large sign said who was to be seen for information about the desirable location. The breeze had died. The clouds were colored and darkening. All the bathers had gone home, and the melody of radio and orchestra music that overhangs Miami Beach was faint and far away. It was an accidental privacy. They had avoided it—and yet known that eventually it would be inevitable. They were, perhaps, a little bit glad that this isolation was not too great. Not a locked garden, not a boat, not a empty house. Only a stretch of sand, with people walking and making noises on the other side of the trees.

He regarded the sunset. "You couldn't do better with McLesch's inks."

She didn't smile. "I like you."

"Mmm. I like you, Vicky. A great deal. And now we're going to talk about it. . . . All right. I wouldn't have dragged you away from school, and all around the world afterward, if I hadn't liked you. I've thought about all that. It's more than liking. The girl who stands here fits a dream of mine that began when I was born, and was only real the day we met. But—there's a lot more than the girl who stands there."

"Yes."

"There's the girl your mother made."

"I'm sorry we fought about Mother."

"So am I. And glad. I didn't mean to be so explicit, or so rude. I merely meant that I don't approve of Mrs. Hadley. I don't see the universe in the same way."

Vicky was nodding. "I know. And you've taught me a lesson. I wish you'd done it long ago. Because I'll never be able to have the same respect for Mother—"

"Not—your mother. Your mother's school of thought—which is a school of how not to think, as a matter of fact. If you could have looked at your mother as a victim of circumstances, instead of as an oracle, then the Vicky I am now discussing wouldn't have come into being. You see, that's the trouble with our parents. They never had the advantage of the pragmatic approach generally applied. To business, yes. To such things as chasing the Seminoles out of Florida—yes. But to morals—no. Or to good and evil—or fun and waste. Some things, our parents accepted without question. A painful error."

"I know. I do know—now, Raoul."

He lay back on the sand. It felt cool. "Then—there's the Vicky that Bob possesses—besides the one I saw and loved."

"Yes."

"You've made her the top Vicky."

"I had to, Raoul."

"Sure you did! She's a fine person."

"Is she pretty?"

He grinned. "You bet! Maybe not in the glamorous way the one I loved was. You know—not so pretty when sleepy and coming out of a dormitory window feet-first. But—sedately pretty. Unruffled, immaculate, gowned. Suburban perfection."

"Yes," she answered softly. "She has every hair in place. Every bottle on her dressing-table matches—and has a spot. She sits at a charming desk every Friday and does the weekly bills. She has regular days for everything—from a facial to saying her prayers."

"And that's the one you've got to be."

"I know. . . . I have to go home—" her voice choked a little.

"And plan the spring flowers and the spring frocks, and hire a man to mow the lawns—"

"It's all fun, Raoul!" She said it sadly.

"Of course it is!" His enthusiasm was genuine. "It's a lovely way of life. You couldn't possibly have stayed with and not known where we would have dinner tonight—"

"Or who we'd see tomorrow."

"Or whether to pack for the tropics or for Sweden."

She shook her head. "Or whether we'd have a duke for lunch, or a doorman."

"Or a tramp."

"I couldn't have done it! I don't know why I thought I wanted to."

"You couldn't have stood the way I run my bills."

"Or your business."

"Or the fact that I like to get up sometimes at daylight and sometimes at noon."

"And you never knew which, when you went to bed."

"That's it, Vicky. And the way you are—you know just what Bob will do. He'll meet you at the train—"

"And drive me home in the sedan, with the heater on."

"And you'll both go up to change for dinner—"

"No. We'll have supper first. We don't dress when we're tired."

"Good heavens! You—"

There were tears in Vicky's eyes. "The alarm clock rings at seven."

"Seven sharp. That's a comfort."

"I like it. And we'll have our coffee—we have a substitute at night."

"Golly. Everything. And it works?"

"Perfectly."

"And some day—you'll have children."

"We"—her voice caught—"we're going to—begin one—next fall—"

"A boy."

She was crying. "A boy—Bob says. And it'll be a boy, too."

"I'm sure it will."

"A boy—and then a girl—and then another boy. And then I'll be thirty-one, or something. I forget just what. And the boys are going to Andover and Yale."

"And the girl to Vassar?"

"Hol"—she struggled—"Holyoke. Isn't that lovely?"

"It is. Awe-inspiring, in fact."

"It's everything I wanted—"

"And Bob planned . . . Vicky, you're a lucky girl!"

"I—I know it!"

She sniffed. And he found that his own eyes were wet. A shiny thing. Drunk, no doubt.

"We'd better leave."

"Yes."

"And—well, there's no use going through all we did down at the fishing camp again."

She shook her head.

He stood up. "So—"

Again she sniffed.

"You better take me back to Marcia's."

"Yes."

"I've had a lovely time."

"Mmm."

They walked through the palm grove. They hunted a taxi; they climbed in. "I look awful," she said, and ducked down so that she could see herself in the windshield mirror. He wanted to kiss her. He didn't. "You look perfectly adorable."

"You mustn't say that!"

"I didn't. It was the driver."

Marcia met them at the door of her house.

"Hang your hat in the armor-locker, Raoul, my lad."

"Thanks. But I'm going to tag along."

He expected Marcia to urge him, but she didn't. "O.K. We'll be in till nine—if you feel social."

"So long—Vicky!"

She knew he was saying good-by. She gulped hard. "So long, Raoul."

He strolled back to their taxicab. "Biltmore-Beach," he said. One of Vicky's handkerchiefs was lying in a corner of the seat. He picked it up. He pursed his lips for whistling—but he couldn't make a sound.

RAOUL entered his rooms—carrying the handkerchief. The MacTavish jumped up from his ink-bottles.

Raoul spread out the square of embroidered linen.

"Pretty, isn't it?"

"Yes—sir."

He touched it to his mustache. "Jasmine."

"Yes sir."

"They'll be out soon. And all Florida will be perfumed. Now it's orange blossoms. In the spring—jasmine. Orange blossoms for weddings. What's jasmine for, the MacTavish?"

"I—I don't know, sir."

Raoul's deeply unhappy face broke into a small and short-lived smile. "No? Then I'm two up on you, Mac. Nautiluses—and jasmine. Jasmine's for remembering. Just what you remember depends on—you. On you—and on—the jasmine—"

He dropped onto the divan. He closed his eyes. He rubbed his cold hand across his brow. "Oh—Mac—"

"Yes sir." The MacTavish didn't have the sort of voice that could express compassion. He wasn't the kind of

person who was made to be articulately sympathetic. Nevertheless his words were an agonized attempt to offer help, to say he understood. "Yes sir." No more. But feeling needs no great vocabulary.

"Mac—pack. This time I mean it. We're going."

A little pause. "At once, sir." The MacTavish went out of the room and fumbled with suitcases. Presently he returned. Raoul's eyes were still closed. "I beg your pardon, sir—"

"Yes, Mac?"

"Where are we going?"

"I don't care. Away. Where would you like to go?"

THE answer was a forlorn whisper. "It doesn't matter—to me either, sir."

Slowly, perplexedly, Raoul looked up. There was something the matter with the MacTavish. He didn't want to leave—or else he too, for some inscrutable private reason, was sad.

"What's the matter, Mac?"

"Nothing, sir!" The denial was stanch—far too stanch for its author.

"Come on! You don't want to go—or something."

"Will it be—far?"

"I don't know. Or care. If you don't want to go far, we'll go near. We can run down to Key West, and take a cruiser out and fish off the Tortugas. God knows, we'd be lost enough there."

"Yes sir." He was embarrassed. "Whatever you say. It is merely a matter of making a few changes in minor arrangements. Trifles—"

Raoul suddenly sat up. He stared at his valet, dumfounded by his hunch.

"Mac, have you got a girl here?"

The MacTavish turned crimson. "Yes sir."

"One you're serious about?"

"Yes sir. I—I—were going to get married tomorrow, sir. But we can easily postpone it."

Raoul gasped. The poor, round-shouldered hero! Going to run away from a gal he was to marry—for him!

"Nice girl, Mac?"

"You know her, sir."

"I know her!" Raoul blanched. "Joy!" he whispered.

The MacTavish whispered too. "Yes sir—Joy. I've seen her whenever I could. Mornings, sometimes. While you were at the camp. She—she doesn't mind the way I look. She wants a steady man. I—I have good stock behind me, sir. Scotch and English. She—she thinks I will go far, sir. She gives me courage."

Raoul wept. There was nothing else to do. Here it was: Love had slipped away from him; but it was going on in the world, nevertheless. Exquisite Joy! Incredible Mac! How proud he would be of her beauty! How proud she would be of his mind! And she was a loyal kid, like Mac. Maybe they wouldn't go far. Maybe they would. But what stuff! It was magnificent!

The MacTavish appeared not to notice that tears had fallen from Raoul's eyes. He turned his back, cleared his throat, shuffled his feet, and walked through the door into the bedroom. He stumbled on the rug and picked up a suitcase which he banged open.

Raoul walked to the window and stood there awhile, jingling the keys in his pocket.

Then he went in and put his hand on the MacTavish's shoulder, turning him around. The other hand he held out.

"Congratulations."

"Thank—thank you, sir."

"She's a peach of a girl."

"Yes sir."

"And she has plenty of sense to pick out a man like you for a husband."

The MacTavish did not say anything.

"About your getting married: It'll be tomorrow. What time had you planned?"

"Six, sir. That is—if I could get off. She has to be at work at seven."

"She's through with that cigarette job."

"But you see—"

"Sure I see. You don't earn enough to support a wife. Look here, Mac. You're not my valet any longer. You're in the ink business. You're going to be my personal representative at the factory—learning the works, at first. We'll have a wedding tomorrow at six! It'll be a wedding

to stick in the memory of man! Then we'll charter a plane! You'll drop me off at Key West. You and Joy will go on to Havana. It's a swell place for a honeymoon, Mac."

"Yes sir." The MacTavish was talking very badly. He stammered, and he was almost inaudible. His Adam's apple had swollen. "I know, sir. Many places of interest. Sugar plantations, cigar factories, the historic Morro Castle—"

Raoul commenced to smile. "My eye, Mac! You live in nightclubs! You live on daiquiris! But—Joy'll show you that! You two kids complement each other pretty well. She's unafraid of everything that paralyzes you. She has personality. And you have—what is your I.Q., anyhow, Mac?"

"One hundred and eighty-three, sir."

Raoul chuckled. He slapped Mac's back. He compelled Mac to sit down and smoke a cigarette. He said: "Oh, Lord! One perfect thing in my life at last!" And he looked with laughter. "Oh, Lord! One hundred and eighty-three!" Laughter took possession of him. He wiped his eyes, and shouted.

Then the MacTavish began to laugh—which Raoul had never seen him do. He laughed at himself, and his precocious I. Q., and at the universe which had made him wait so long for a break—ecstatically, burstingly, until his voice choked and he ran from the room, overwhelmed.

Chapter Ten



S Raoul had driven away from the Grosses' house, things had begun to happen there; and as Raoul discussed jasmine with the MacTavish, they were happening.

Marcia hurried up the stairs behind Vicky—and she had to hurry, because Vicky was heading for bed and a good cry. "Look,"

Marcia said anxiously, "I only let your Lochinvar go for the time being—"

Vicky gasped: "He's gone! That was good-by!" She hurried on.

"We'll take that up separately. The point is—Bob called."

Vicky stopped. She forgot about her cry. "Bob?"

"His secretary."

"Is anything the matter?"

"Plenty."

"What?"

"I'm not sure. But I can guess. I've cut it out of the paper. A social-gossip columnist ran a little note about you and Raoul."

Vicky looked scared. Then she giggled. "What did he say?"

Marcia shrugged. "Not much. Just something about Raoul divorced you without, apparently, losing all interest in you."

"You're sure Bob's all right?"

"In the physical sense, yes."

Vicky began to walk upstairs again. "I'll call him right away."

"No."

"Why not?"

"Because, for one thing, you can't reach him. His secretary left word to that effect. He will call you at midnight. And—for another, you're tight."

"Am I?"

"You should see what has happened to your mascara!" By midnight all the mischief had gone out of Vicky. All the drinks. She was cold sober, and as nervous as a cat.

Marcia and Vicky sat in the latter's boudoir, waiting for the call. They didn't talk much. Occasionally Vicky moaned: "I've hurt him! He detests such things!" Or, "It was so cheap of me! So shabby!" Or other words to that effect.

A shot through the heart would have made her flinch no more than the ring of the phone. She picked it up. "New York calling."

He was in New York, then. Too busy to go home, even. The poor man!

Marcia, having finished her hand-holding vigil, eased out.

"Hello!" Vicky's voice was little and afraid.

"Hello!" Bob's was rough—savage. Then he modulated it. "Hello, Vicky!"

"How are you, dear? Oh—I'm glad to hear you!"

"Nice to hear you. . . . Look, Vicky. I'm going to be tied up here indefinitely. The men won't listen to reason. I've shut down the plant. I want you to come home."

HER eyes widened. He hadn't heard about the item in the paper! Or perhaps he wasn't going to say anything about it! That was simply marvelous of him. She wouldn't have believed he would do such a thing. They always talked over their troubles.

"Yes, darling."

"I've arranged reservations by wire. There's a train in the morning. You have—she paused and evidently consulted a memorandum—"Section 6 in car X 15. The train leaves at—"

She didn't hear the time—or at least, remember it afterward. A sudden vague irritation stirred her. You leave at such-and-such an hour, in such-and-such a car—as if she were freight.

"Sweetheart," she said warmly, "I'm glad you want me to come back. I've missed you terribly. But—" She'd take the train he had arranged. She only wanted him to realize that she was a person. To beg ever so little, to ask, at least, and not command. "But—I'm not sure I can make the morning train."

"Why not?" It was snapped at her. Not a question: the exclamation of a fretful executive.

"Well, I've made dates for tomorrow. Quite important ones."

"Rubbish! I want you home. Marcia can apologize for you. I'll try to meet the train, dear—"

"Try."

He grew more impatient. "Sure. Try. I'm in the middle of a fight. Day and night. My time's not my own. You get on that train! If I can't meet you, I'll send some one for you—or arrange to have the car left at the station in Cliffmont—let you know by wire."

"But—"

"Our three minutes are almost up—"

It was Bob—Bob within his rights, she knew. He was having a fight. A strike. He was very busy, no doubt. Maybe not, too. Maybe he was at his club. This was all—just his manner: the manner he had been using all day over the phone to intimidate his employees and harry his aides. Vicky thought that, in a flash.

And in the same flash she thought that sooner or later he would find out about the gossip-column note. Some one would show it to him. One of their closest friends in Cliffmont, no doubt. She knew what the close friends in Cliffmont were. Why not tell him now, and have it over with?

"Bob—" Her tone was appealing.

"Have you got that straight?"

"Bob—something kind of funny—but rather unpleasant has happened."

She heard his long-suffering sigh and his stolid question. "What is it?"

One of those detestable gossip-columnists ran a piece today—about Raoul and me."

"What!" It stung her ear.

"It wasn't anything—really. Just said that Raoul was still interested in me, although we've been divorced."

"Oh, my God!" Half scream of rage—half moan of pain. "You would get into a mess just when everything in the world is happening to make it difficult for me!"

"But—"

"How did you let a thing like that happen! I thought you had more sense! Don't you know how I feel about anything that touches my name!"

"But—"

"I asked you a question: Now answer it." His voice was hard again. "How did it happen?"

"How does any such thing happen? We went places together. Usually with the Grosses—"

"Usually with the Grosses! Usually! Do you know I'm handling a strike? Do you know I'm practically out of my mind! And on top of that, you have to disgrace us publicly. See here—"

"But Bob—honey! Nothing happened! I swear it! You know me!"

"Sure! I know you! But who's going to believe that? Husband called away by an emergency. Wife starts play-

ing around with the pip-squeak she was once married to, before he's out of sight. Oh, Lord—that's a pretty how-de-do! Of all the—"

He started a harangue. Vicky dropped the telephone for a moment and looked at it. She could hear him still—a metallic, lilliputian fury that streamed from the receiver. She felt cold—and less ashamed of herself. He was her husband, he was under a strain. She had stolen her vacation by false pretenses. She loved him. She would stick to him through everything. But she was not going to let him bawl her out in such a ridiculously emotional manner. And she wasn't going to let him manage her destiny as if she were luggage. This was a crisis, an accidental one. If she yielded completely, she would never again be mistress of anything.

His harangue stopped abruptly. She picked up the phone. "Are you listening?" he said.

If he had asked that question pleadingly, it would have changed her response. But he didn't. He was still boiling.

"Yes."

"All right. Now. Do you understand?"

"I understand thoroughly, Bob. But I'm not coming home in the morning. I'll take the train—let me see—the day after tomorrow. Good-by."

She hung up.

She sat on the bed awhile—trembling but calm. She expected that he would call back. When minutes passed, and he didn't, she went downstairs.

Her head swam; the pit of her stomach was leaden. She was dizzy, but she walked into the living-room with regal poise.

Marcia saw her shattered eyes and the red spots on her cheeks. So did Herbie.

"Everything—all right?" Marcia asked.

"Everything is. We quarreled. He wanted me to leave tomorrow. I'm going the day after."

"It's a long time," Marcia murmured.

"What is?"

"The day after tomorrow."

SIX o'clock. Joy was marrying the MacTavish. Bob hammered on the Grosses' door.

Marcia put down the magazine, peered through a curtain, and said to her husband: "Here's the wolf coming down on the fold."

"Hendon?"

"Listen! He's a pretty good door-hammerer."

Herbie rose. He turned the knob. He smiled urbanely.

"Hello, Bob. This is a surprise!"

Bob's face was clenched and his eyes furious. "Is it?" he said. "Where's Vicky?"

"Why—hello, Bob!" Marcia came up.

"Where's Vicky?" Bob was suddenly afraid he might be wasting his rage. "Did she head north this morning, the way I told her to?"

"No," Herbie replied slowly. "No. She didn't."

"Well?"

Marcia was smoothly sardonic. "Come in, Bob. Sit down. Have a drink. We're your old friends the Grosses. Remember us? You flew down, I presume? How was the trip? Bumpy?"

Bob turned to her husband. "I was in the middle of a fight," he said bitterly. "I had to compromise that strike to get away. Maybe that'll give you an idea that I'm in no mood for trifling! Answer my question, please."

That statement annoyed Herbie. Bob's entire manner begged for a baiting. He was thinking only of himself and his business and the pain that was being caused him, and the trouble. "The Pan American Airport in Coconut Grove is supposed to be one of the most interesting sights Miami affords," Herbie answered. "A magnificent terminal with a handsome restaurant—and all day long you can watch the aerial commerce with South America and the West Indies settle on the Bay. Majestic clipper-ships from the antipodes—"

"She went there with that McLiesh fop!" Bob said.

"She went to say good-by to him." Marcia's correction was emphatic. "Raoul's leaving town. His valet informed us of the fact only a short while ago. So Vicky hurried down to see him off—at the Pan American."

"Or to go with him!"

Marcia relented. "No. Look, Bob. You've got the whole thing wrong. Vicky has behaved beautifully. She

was going to see Raoul off—and hurry home to you. Can't you understand? She loves you. She's true to you. You can't treat a woman like a dog. You drive down there now and tell her everything's O.K. and that you love her, and she'll be fine. Happy. Don't you—"

His voice shook with a mixture of self-pity and ire. "So I have the whole thing wrong, and Vicky behaved beautifully! And I'm to forgive her and she'll be fine! How about me? Where do I come in? How do you think I like having my life-work jammed up by a disgusting thing like this? How do you think I like to have the Hendon name smeared through half the newspapers in the country? What do you think I am, anyhow? A molly-coddle? I tell you, that girl is going to learn a lesson she won't forget as long as she lives! And thanks for backing up a damned justifiably outraged husband, and for telling me right away what I wanted to know, and all your other considerations!"

He strode to the door and banged it.

Marcia looked at her husband. "Shall we go?"

"I'd like to. No."

"Poor Vicky!"

VICKY drove hurriedly across the Venetian Causeway and through the main section of Miami. She speeded up on Brickell Avenue. She didn't know what she was going to do. Raoul was leaving—thank God, his valet had told her in time; and she couldn't let Raoul leave with things the way they were.

Raoul leaving. . . . So long. That was what he had said on the night before. Just—so long.

It couldn't be that way. She was going back to Bob—soon, in the morning. But she had to see Raoul first.

The houses thinned. She raced past the Deering Estates. . . . So long. Her heart ached. She bit her lips. Palms and bougainvillea and glimpses of water. Then a tremendous lawn with the Bay behind it and airplanes standing outside hangars. She turned in.

The place was full of people. She parked her car and hurried among them. Where was he? Her eyes went from face to face. Where was he? She asked. Nobody seemed to know where a chartered plane would be.

Then Vicky felt sick. She hung onto the rail around the slowly turning globe in the center of the waiting-room. Joy was coming toward her. Joy—in a traveling suit, with a radiant face.

Joy saw her. Joy's eyes shone like stars. "Oh! Hello, Mrs. Hendon! Do you know you're looking at the happiest girl in the world? I can't believe it! I've just been married, and I'm going on my honeymoon in a chartered plane! Could you believe it! I'm in a terrible rush!"

And Joy was gone.

Vicky started back to her car. Not feeling, or thinking. Joy hastened through the vaulted room. She found Raoul in the restaurant, where he had said he would be, having a drink. She sat down and babbled, and he looked at her—at her face, her lips, her eyes, her pride and her happiness. She had the right name—Joy. And he could tell when the MacTavish appeared at the restaurant entrance by what happened to the girl.

Mac was wearing a new suit. There was something about him. His chin was high; his shoulders had expanded; his eyes were direct; his voice didn't waver.

"Plane's ready," he said.

Raoul nodded. "Right! I'll polish this off—have one, you kids?"

They didn't need drinks.

Raoul paid his check. They started, all three—Joy in the middle, arm-in-arm. "Guess who I saw?" she said. "Mrs. Hendon! She must be seeing somebody off—"

"Vicky?" Raoul asked quietly.

Joy nodded several times. "Yes—the girl you were married to. She's so beautiful, isn't she? But she doesn't look well. I just saw her for a minute. I told her I was married and the happiest girl—"

Raoul dropped her arm. "Did you tell her *who* you'd married?"

Her laugh and the shake of her head were flashes of silver. "Why should I?" She laughed more. "It'll be in the papers anyhow, won't it?"

Raoul had stopped. "Was she alone?"

"Sure. I guess so. That is—is something the matter? Did I do wrong, Raoul?"

"No. No. She looked sick?" His voice was far away.

And then he acted. He thrust his wallet into Mac's hands. "Go on, you two! There's the money!"

"But you were going!" Joy and Mac spoke together.

He was smiling—radiantly. "That's another surprise. You don't want an old man in your party—even between here and Key West. Good-by! Good luck!"

He kissed Joy's cheek. "See you in two weeks!"

He ran toward the parking-yard.

There were many cars. He raced along the line of them, looking for the Grosses' limousine or their roadster. He couldn't find either. He started a second circuit.

"Hey!" a man bawled.

Raoul stared. He stopped his half-run through the yard.

He said, "Hello, Bob," quietly.

He was still sitting at the wheel of his car. "Where's Vicky?"

"I was looking for her myself."

"You were! What business have you got to be looking for her! I came all the way from New York to see her! I don't think it's going to be necessary for you to see her again—ever!"

Raoul walked up to the car. He was smiling. "I ought to be able to decide that for myself, hadn't I?"

"What?" Bob screamed the word at him—frenetically, and yet as if he had not heard correctly.

Raoul opened the door of the car and climbed in and sat down beside Bob. "Vicky's just left here," he said calmly. "She's probably gone back to the Grosses'. Let's go and find her."

"Get out of this car!"

"Come on," Raoul replied. "Let's start." He settled back in his seat. "I'm not going to hurt your Vicky. I just want to tell her that my valet got married."

Bob started the car. It spat gravel and swung around. It roared down the highway toward Miami.

Bob didn't talk. He drove—and he could not tell why. The casualness with which Raoul had imposed himself upon Bob, the calmness with which he had accepted Bob's appearance, were so monstrous that they disarmed him. He began to think, along the red-hot rims of his rage, that maybe Raoul at least was innocent. So he grew even more furious at Vicky. He was bursting. If Raoul had been as offhand during his absence as now, then the ignominy which he was enduring was that much greater. "Of all the fools!" Bob bellowed.

"Thanks!"

"I'm talking about Vicky! To get me away from a thing as important as that strike!"

"How did it come out?"

Bob cursed. He trembled. "How could it! She dragged me down here before I was through with it!"

"You know—they don't like people to do eighty in the city limits?"

"Are you crazy?"

"Doubtless."

"Because if you make one more dizzy crack, I'm going to sock you."

"Funny. I was just thinking of socking you."

BOB stared glassily. The car swerved. He yelled. "What do you mean by that?"

"Just what I said. You're insulting Vicky. I was thinking of defending her." Raoul's nonchalance had increased to an incredible lassitude, in which there was seemingly no trace of wariness.

"You dog!" Bob bellowed.

The front wheel hit the curb.

A police whistle blew insistently, shrilly, behind them. The car careened back in the street and slowed.

"We're arrested," Raoul said. He looked back at the approaching police-car.

"First, though, by God—" Bob swung. Raoul ducked. A cop, a Southern-voiced cop, bawled: "What's going on here?"

With agility Raoul opened the door, ducked again, and stepped into the street. "Fight," he said. He was pretty noncommittal.

Bob poured out, roaring.

The cop shouted: "Come on, Ed! They're drunk! Hey!"

He grabbed Raoul. The other man grabbed Bob.

Bob couldn't speak. Raoul had nothing to say. The officers walked them across the street to a filling-station. One of them went to a phone. His purpose was clear. He

gave his name and his location and added: "Send the wagon. Couple of drunks."

Then he walked over to the car and drove it into the station.

Bob began to fizzle, like a fuse. "See here," he said. "Look! You can give me a ticket for speeding. But you can't arrest me."

"We done it," the cop answered.

"I'm the President of the Hendon Belt Corporation!"

The cop smiled. "We got orders. Doesn't matter who you are, Mister. Campaign against drunken driving. And look here: You're not only going to jail. You're a-going to spend five days in jail. They're letting off *nobody*."

Bob waved his arms. "Say! Do you think you lousy crackers have got a jail that'll hold me!"

Raoul pursed his lips. "We better do our talking when we get to the police desk, Bob, old man."

"But he sent for a patrol wagon!" Bob's voice was high.

Raoul nodded. "The Black Maria."

"They can't do that to me! I won't have it! Suppose it gets in the papers?"

The cop was still smirking. "It will. Tomorrow morning."

There was a clang in the distance. The yawning doors of the patrol apparently invited Raoul. He stepped in gracefully. Bob, however, made a final verbal foray. "You damn dumb Southerners! Look in my wallet! Look at my club-membership cards! Find out who I am! This'll cost you your jobs! I'll see to it that both of you—"

The cop pushed him hard with his billy.

Raoul said: "Shhh!"

AT the desk in the station, Bob began to learn what his outburst had cost him.

"Drunk," the cop said evenly. "Driving eighty. Fighting. Disturbing the peace. Insulting an officer."

The other cop, who had not spoken at any time, nodded.

Raoul looked at the man behind the desk. "Lieutenant," he said, "there's been a misunderstanding. We're not drunk. We plead guilty to speeding—"

The lieutenant glanced up. "What does the arresting officer say?"

"They don't like crackers," replied the cop who had made the arrest.

"Take 'em over."

"We'll want a lawyer," Raoul said. His composure, now, was somewhat damaged. "Can I phone from here?"

"From the jail," the lieutenant answered.

They took their coats and hats and Bob's wallet. They led them up into the cell blocks and locked them in a detention pen.

There were several other prisoners in the detention pen. Some of them were drunk; one or two of them were asleep. Bob stood in the middle of the place, quivering. Raoul went to the barred door and yelled. A guard came. "Listen—" he began diplomatically.

Bob walked up in back of him and hit him hard, behind the ear. . . .

When Raoul came to, he was alone in a single cell. He had a headache. He sat up on his bunk of ribbon steel. He rubbed his ear. He thought. He remembered seeing

Bob's fist, out of the corner of his eye. "Nice fellow," he said to himself.

He walked to the window. Below was Miami, as it had looked from the blimp—glittering and magical. Raoul knew cops. He estimated that they wouldn't get out until morning.

Then somebody knocked on his door. "We'll make one call for you," a voice said grudgingly.

VICKY was packing. She was afraid she wouldn't get away before Bob returned—but she was trying. She'd go in the car—anywhere—Palm Beach. She knew people there. And Bob wouldn't think of that. He'd imagine she would go farther. Palm Beach—or anywhere. Anywhere to be alone—to be by herself, for just a few hours. Anything, she felt, to get out of Miami. Bob could come up in the morning. She thought that he was probably still hanging around the airport, where Marcia had said he had gone. But he'd be back eventually.

The phone rang. Marcia answered downstairs.

Vicky closed her bags, sat down and wrote a note. Marcia could deliver it—after she had a decent start, so she could be alone. . . . Alone—alone! The desire consumed her.

"Darling," she wrote: "I'm at the Wintons' home in Palm Beach. I'm sorry about everything. Come up. I love you."

Marcia climbed the stairs. She leaned weakly against the door-jamb.

"Vicky—" she murmured. Vicky looked up. "I'm all set!"

"Vicky!" The voice was strained—by what, one could not have said. "Bob and Raoul are in jail!"

"Jail!" She jumped up.

Marcia nodded crazedly. "Arrested—for drunken driving. They were coming back together. And Vicky—"

"It doesn't matter! All the better! You deliver this note as soon as he gets out tonight."

"And—and Vicky—Raoul didn't marry Joy."

Vicky sat down.

"His valet did! That MacTavish person!"

There was a silence. Vicky scanned her note. "Darling. . . . Palm Beach. . . . sorry. I love you." She folded it. She put it in an envelope.

She bent over the desk. "Anyhow, Marcia—I'm going into hiding for a little while. You take care of this note." She picked up a pen.

Then her hand halted, paralyzed. An incredible possibility had occurred to her.

She could address the note to either one of them, and have Marcia pretend, to the other, that she had not said where she was going!

It was the moment for decision. She had avoided it all her life—postponed it, denied its existence. Whether a woman should offer everything for love, or take security and littleness instead. . . .

Vicky dipped the pen. Boldly she wrote across the envelope: "Raoul McLiesh."

She snatched her suitcases. She fled.

Marcia picked up the missive. She read the name on it. "Herbie!" she called. "Herbie! Come quick! I'm going to have hysterics!"

Next Month

A COMPLETE BOOK-LENGTH (50,000 word) NOVEL

by

MARY HASTINGS BRADLEY

The brilliant author of "Pattern For Three"

and

A Novelette

by

PEARL S. BUCK

Who wrote "The Good Earth"

"I crossed the Fjords in a Ford

**and met the
same old
friend
everywhere"**

"As I motored through the fishing villages of Norway," writes R. C. Squires, "watching the Midnight Sun gleam on waterfall and mountain, I found I could read only two words of the Viking language — 'Canadian Club' — two words that they seemed to know as well along the North Cape as in my home territory, the North Shore of Chicago."

IN 87
LANDS

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